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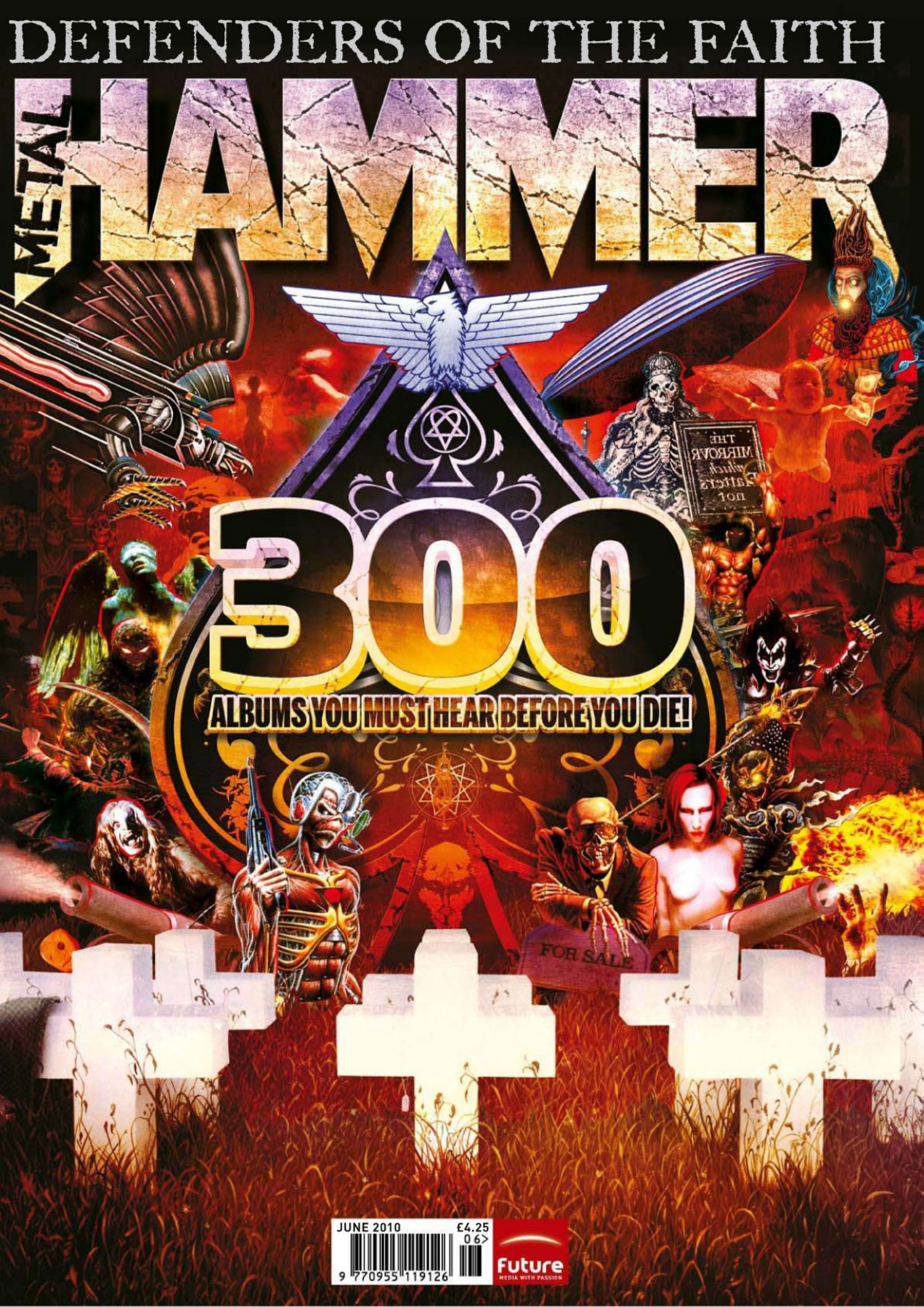

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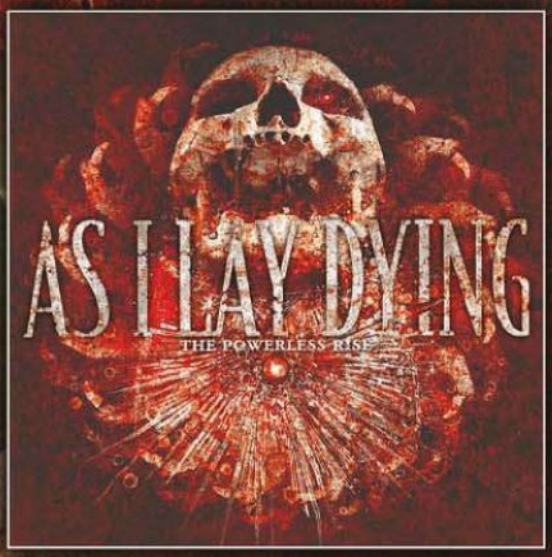
AS I LAY DYING

THE POWERLESS RISE



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METAL HAMMER

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Editor speaks

Hands up who remembers the song that got them into metal? *Of course you do.* For metallers, music isn't just something to put on your shelf or your mp3 player or just play in the background. It's a statement of *who you are.* Can you ever have enough? No, but there are some bona fide classics that everyone needs to hear, and even we learned a thing or two from this month's monumental guide.

But before we kick off this very special issue, complete with 30th anniversary tribute to *British Steel* (huge, huge thanks to everyone who contributed) let's take a moment to remember one of the true giants of metal, Peter Steele of Type O Negative. His gallows humour and the stirring melancholy of his music will never be surpassed, and the world will be a darker place without him.

Stay Metal.

Alexander Milas
Editor

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CHAINMAIL

Rage for Order

I'm writing to *Metal Hammer* from Witbank, South Africa to emphasise *Hammer*'s effect on my life. I'm 17 and a metaller 'til the end. SA's youth is moving through a really turbulent time after the murder of a former political leader; this caused extreme racism to arise between black and white. Our schools are warzones, but I'm so proud of being a metaller. People here buy *Hammer* religiously, all races, as my boyfriend and I do. There are only four stores that stock *Hammer*, yet they are always sold out despite the fact that it arrives here two weeks late. Metal brings nations together and through your magazine many people of different races stand together. *Hammer* has had a tremendous effect on my life in every aspect – I'm so thankful for a place to be accepted and to stand tall regardless of judgement. I've been judged regardless of the smile I always wear and how much I laugh. South Africa is a beautiful country whose metal community, which has gone through Hell to be able to thrive, has truly been touched by your phenomenal magazine. You guys make me so proud.

Keep going strong, many are behind you.

Danni Wright

It's a sad truth that so many try to emphasise the differences between people. *Hammer* is proud to support the unity of open-minded people under the flag of metal! Keep smiling, Danni.

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YOUTH GONE POOR

Why is it called Download? It should be called CLAHNLOAD because everybody who is buying a ticket is a bloody CLAHN! Great lineup: AC/DC, Bullet For My Valentine, Steel CLAHNther, Five Finger Death Punch, Dommin and Stone Sour. Shame people are paying £180 for it. I'm 13 so it's hard to come by money when I've not got a job. I'd only play £180 if Pantera, Blessed By A Broken Heart and Limp Bizkit were playing. That's why I think Download should be changed to CLAHNLOAD!
MATTHEW SEDDON

Think yourself lucky Matthew, if this was 1810 you *would* have a job, an involuntary one, probably up a chimney. For those confused about the term 'clahn' we refer you to the *Metal Hammer* Podcast, available via iTunes.

WYLDE STYLE

One of your devoted subscribers, my brother Adam, had a car accident and was in a coma for just over two weeks. When he woke up he didn't know who he was let alone his family. To provide some comfort we brought in some issues of *Hammer*. I don't know what magic you guys hold but I have to thank you: he may not remember us, but he remembered Zakk Wylde. Since then he has been singing the likes of Pantera and Metallica and we may even be able to take him out of his rehabilitation centre for an evening to see AC/DC at Download. It's not in my nature to ask for free things but I love my brother and my dignity is a small price to pay to see his beaming smile: could you please send him something, maybe from Zakk Wylde or Five Finger Death Punch? Thank you in advance.
BECKY SMITH

Sorry to hear about Adam, and glad *Hammer* has helped. We'll see if we can't sort something personal out for him. Oh, and have fun at Download!

SLAYED!

Three years ago I was just another hip-hop-listening product of mainstream society. Then my life changed dramatically. I made friends with some people who were metalheads. I wasn't into their look but I dug the music. Everyone in my town thought that Slayer were crap, but when I saw Slayer's *Seasons In The Abyss* on an Australian music show called *Rage*... words can't describe what I felt. Since then I've learned more about life than in all the days leading up to it. If anyone can understand the impact of a single band I'm sure it's you lot.
ELIZABETH FERGUSON

Welcome, welcome! Slayer are a band who have brought so many to the faithful, it's good to have you with us.

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shout heard!

WRITE TO: *METAL HAMMER*, 2 BALCOMBE STREET, LONDON, NW1 6NW OR EMAIL: CHAINMAIL@FUTURENET.CO.UK

THE HORNED ONE

This picture was on the front of a Coventry newspaper because he's coming here to deliver a mass. Turns out the Pope is a metal fiend and couldn't help throwing up the horns. I'm almost tempted to become a Catholic!
KING GAZ

Pope Benedict XVI: the beautiful papal

Amazing! Ronnie James Dio has a lot to answer for! Everyone from Megan Fox to Xzibit is throwing the horns. Dee Snider's campaign to stop people who aren't metal throwing the horns has a long way to go.

FARZAD BEYOND DRIVEN

Your *Planet Rock* CD absolutely slayed and is a strong contender for the best compilation you've ever done (alongside *Getcha Pull!!*, the Dime tribute album). The music on it rocked out hard. Stand outs for me include Farzad Golpayegani, Scarab and Myrath. In fact I downloaded *Three* by Farzad Golpayegani from Amazon as soon as I'd finished the sample of *47* on the CD. These guys need all the help they can get due to the oppressive government ruling over them so cheers *Hammer* for helping them get the word out.
ETHAN

Great news! We are very proud. It was like taking a trip round the world in the comfort of the *Hammer* office. Support your not-very-local scene!

SPIT IT OUT!

All the people who think Slipknot's acoustic songs are shit can go straight to Hell where they belong. *Snuff* is one of my favourite songs. Anyone who gives Dave Mustaine shit is absolutely pathetic because he kicks ass. And finally anyone who complains about Zakk leaving Ozzy can go fuck themselves because if the Prince Of Darkness wants a new guitarist the Prince Of Darkness gets a new guitarist.
SCOTT GULBIS, AUSTRALIA

Phew, got that off your chest, Scott?

LOST IN TIME...

I am from India and I love your mag. I have only one request: please give us more articles and news on the great forgotten bands such as Dark Angel, Forbidden Sacrifice, Death, Heathen, Demolition Hammer, Nuclear Assault, etc.
SHYAM PRASAD, INDIA

It's hard to cover bands that aren't so active, but did you see our Heathen piece last month?

MACHINE DEAD

Machine Head were boring as fuck on the recent tour. They haven't written a decent song since *Ten Ton Hammer*. I was bored through their entire set at the show in Cardiff until they played *Davidian* at the end. Best tune they will ever write – end of! Hatebreed are usually awesome but their stage show gets cheesier every time I see 'em. Bleeding Through were the best band on the tour.
JAMES SAUNDERS

Can't say we agree, James, as from top to bottom the tour took our fucking heads off every night! We suggest you purchase yourself a pair of new ears.

BALLS TO THE WALL(ABY)

My balls were torn off by a South African Wallaby. If I know my Dragonforce, this makes me perfect as replacement singer.
SAM TOMLINSON

We've seen ZP's balls so you're not. Unless you have massive hair and a gap between your teeth. Actually, it was Sam's nads we saw...

Text Offender

MAD AS HELL? CAN'T TAKE IT ANY MORE? TELL US WHAT YOU'RE THINKING! TEXT RANT FOLLOWED BY YOUR MESSAGE TO 80889 (NOTE: TEXT COSTS 50P AT ALL TIMES. SEE WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK FOR ALL TERMS & CONDITIONS).

I can't say that *Diamond Eyes* is Deftones' best album, but it's their best since *White Pony*... IMO makes *White Pony* seem mediocre.
JEREMY MUSIAL

Maiden always have a pre-festival warm-up gig in Dublin! It's just Maiden tradition, live with it.
JOHN MICHAEL GIBSON

I got my *Hammer* nice and early when they posted it to me... subscription rocks! \m/
EN RIVLIN

When I saw Bleeding Through with BFMV, they shit all over them.
ANTHONY HENTHORN

If I had the money for Dahnload, Thonithphere and Bladstock 2010, I would die a happy man in 2011.
TOM SAUNDERS

Norway does not need ice hockey – we make the soundtrack to life!
EILEEN HJERTUM

ASK Jurgen

"WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A RELIGION WHERE IT'S A SIN TO BE GAY BUT OKAY FOR PRIESTS TO BE PAEDOPHILES?" ASKS JURGEN. PASS HIM THE PETROL AND MATCHES AND FRIEND HIM AT WWW.MYSPACE.COM/JURGENTOKSVIG

Dear Jurgen,
It was Thursday and I was looking into the metal section at HMV. My eyes began to bleed as I discovered albums from Panic At The Disco, My Chemical Romance and Nickelback in the metal section. Today I am still haunted by the terrifying ordeal.
Anonymous Metalhead, via MySpace
Jurgen says: Ah, sexy Christina Ricci from My Chemical Romance makes my trembling broadsword point moonwards. What a lovely young lady. Also, I hate Nickelback's Country and Western music for fat line dancers but there is something about shapely singer Sharon's wavy, solid brass hair and face like a surprised greyhound doing a shit that really makes my trousers glow with throbbing warmth. Look at her eyes! Like two boiled eggs covered in spiders! Aiiieeeeeeeee! Nils, the mop! There's been a spillage!

Dear Jurgen,
Would you choose Satan's cucumber or Nils' broadsword?
Steve Mayhem Morrison, via MySpace
Jurgen says: Nils' broadsword would slice the Horned One's cucumber into easy-to-eat rounds, ideal for summer picnic sandwiches.

Dear Jurgen,
I am a metalhead from Gloucester and I'm 15. My brother and I need your help. Every time my family go on a car journey or even listens to any music, it's ALWAYS Lily Allen. Can you recommend any metal to vanquish Lily Allen and defend the faith?
Alex Buckley, via MySpace
Jurgen says: Read this message to the driver next time you get into the car. Dear stereo fascist. Please turn off Lily Allen. Just because she looks exactly like the giant foetus the size of Jupiter at the end of *2001: A Space Odyssey*, it doesn't mean you have to worship her like bone-wielding monkey men from the Cro-Magnon times. Instead put on *The Number Of The Beast* by Iron Maiden whose lyrics reference the King James Bible, Robert Burns, John Wyndham and Patrick McGoohan. You will also then recognise that it rocks like a nerd at a *Trek* convention.

Dear Jurgen,
You must realise that you look like a tool wearing all that make-up, right?
Steve Confusion, via MySpace
Jurgen says: Aiiieeeeeeee! Prepare to receive my broadsword violently! I do not wear make-up! This is how I look naturally because of the lack of sunlight in my native Oslo. Take that back or I will dig up your beloved pet dog and shit up its nose. Make-up? What do you take me for?! You pubic hair-infused British clagnut!

Dear Jurgen,
I need to clean my collection of antique coins before selling them on eBay. Do you have any tips?
Gregory Pecker, via MySpace
Jurgen says: Leave them all in coke overnight then, buff and clean with an old rag using Brasso and hot water. AH HA HA HA! I am making the joke, British limpet cock! Burn down a church – that should have them looking like new in no time! Aiiieeeeeeeee!

Bruce Dickinson: coming to kick Lily Allen off your stereo

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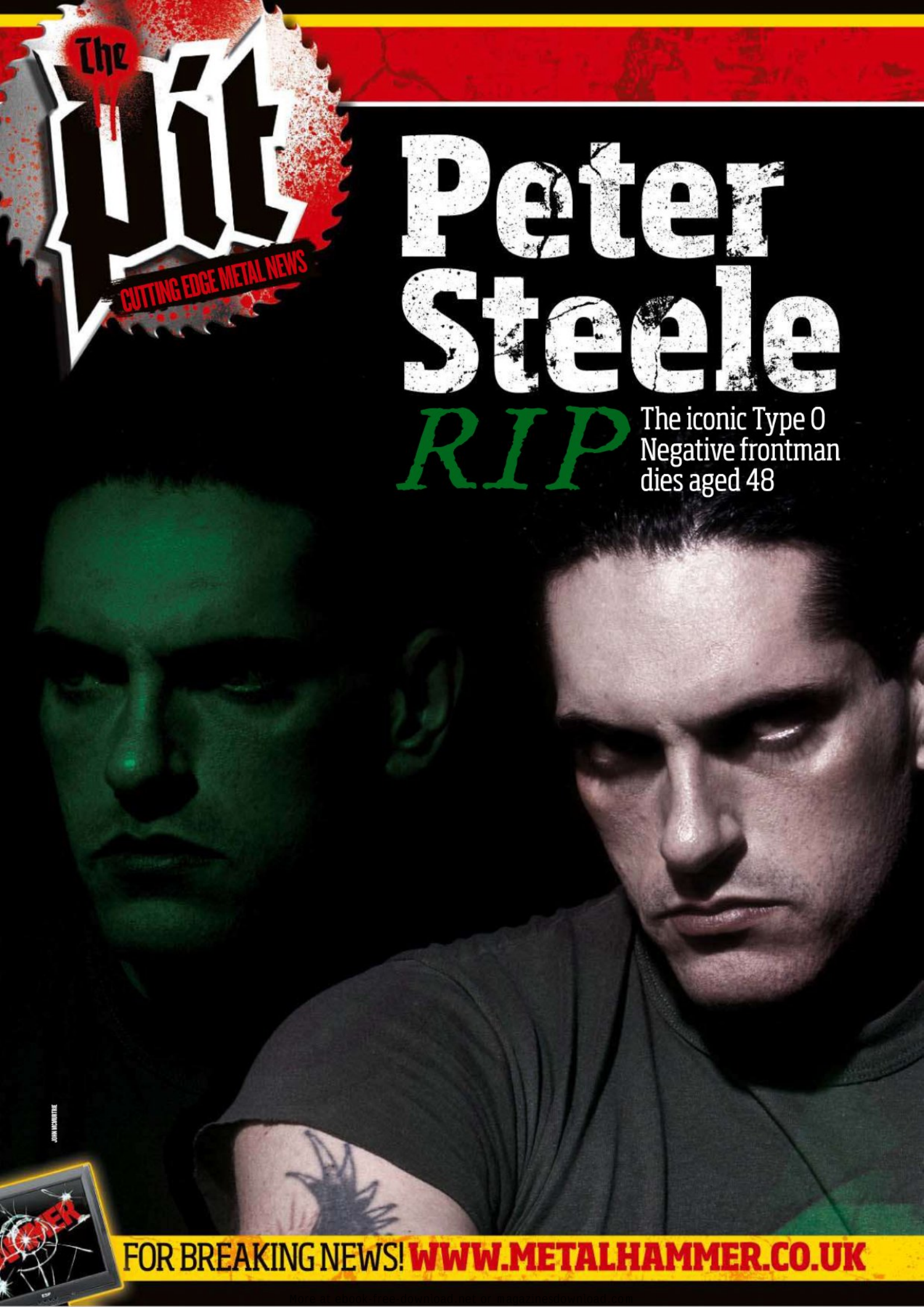
The Pit

CUTTING EDGE METAL NEWS

Peter Steele

RIP

The iconic Type O Negative frontman dies aged 48



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SONISPHERE UPDATE! TURN THE PAGE TO GET THE LATEST EXCITING ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR THIS YEAR'S SONISPHERE AND KEEP AN EYE ON WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK FOR THE LATEST BANDS TO BE ANNOUNCED FOR THE KNEBWORTH PARK FESTIVAL ON JULY 31-AUGUST 1.

At the time of going to press, *Metal Hammer* was saddened to learn that Peter Steele has died of cardiac arrest aged 48.

The news broke on the morning of April 15 and was confirmed by the afternoon by Type O Negative manager Mike Renault who said: "Peter passed away last night. As of now it appears to have been heart failure. That's all the details we have right now."

The band have said: "Ironically Peter had been enjoying a long period of sobriety and improved health and was imminently due to begin writing and recording new music for our follow-up to *Dead Again*, released in 2007." Keyboardist Josh Silver said: "Peter, my endless source of frustration (as I'm yours), you have really done it this time. Though I never told you that I harbour a deep respect for you, I do. Goodbye, my friend." Guitarist Kenny Hickey said: "Part of me died with him" and drummer Johnny Kelly said: "It was a privilege to have been your bandmate. It's something that I will always cherish."

Steele's family issued a statement saying: "The music world has lost a great talent, and music fans worldwide are mourning, but for our family we are mourning a beloved brother, uncle, cousin, friend and funny man."

The rock and metal world was shocked and saddened at the news, and tributes flooded in from all corners of the globe.

Devildriver's Dez Fafara posted a statement that reads: "Peter Steele was one of the nicest guys in music. He was always kind to me through the years. Big guy with a huge heart. We have all lost a legend, a voice that will never be duplicated."

Mille Petrozza, vocalist/guitarist of Kreator, said: "Peter Steele was one of my all-time favourite musicians ever! I've only met him once briefly and he was just the nicest guy. This is a black day for music."

Lacuna Coil singer Andrea Ferro said: "Thanks a lot for the great journey I had (and will always have) with your music. Thanks a lot for the inspiration and friendship, RIP."

"Well, I have to say I am shocked by this horrible news..." said Opeth's Mikael Åkerfeldt. "Basically, I just want to express my condolences on behalf of Opeth. "The dude was funny, intense, intimidating and overall a good guy. Thoughts go out to Johnny, Kenny and Josh as well as to Peter's family and friends. His and their music lives on, or as they say, echoes in eternity."

Peter Steele was born Petrus T Ratajczyk on January 4, 1962 in Brooklyn, New York, USA. Of Polish, Icelandic, English and Russian heritage, the 6' 7" frontman of Type O Negative had become known as much for his iconic look as his dark, deadpan humour.

Roadrunner A&R Monte Connor – who signed Type O Negative to Roadrunner – exclusively told *Hammer*: "We at Roadrunner are all terribly saddened by the news of Peter's death. Peter had been with Roadrunner since 1985 when Carnivore became one of the first US bands signed to the label and helped pave the way for the opening of the US office in the fall of 1986. Type O Negative helped kick down doors for Roadrunner, with *Bloody Kisses* giving us our first US gold record. To this day, artistically it is one of the top five records this company has ever released, if not THE best."

Before joining Type O Negative, Peter played for the metal group Fallout and the thrash band Carnivore and has, at various times, been treated for depression and even been incarcerated for violent behaviour. Rumours of Peter's death spread after the band's website posted an image of a tombstone bearing his name and the dates 1962-2005. It was revealed as a joke but Peter had been known to disappear for extended periods with no explanation from the band or management.

Monte adds: "Peter was not always the easiest guy to deal with – he was very principled, knew exactly what he wanted and did not suffer fools gladly. But beneath the tough exterior was a man with a heart of gold who was always there to help his friends. His defining trait for me was the way he treated everyone fairly and with tremendous respect. Peter and I remained friendly even after the band parted ways with Roadrunner though we didn't get to speak all that much. But when we did, he always conveyed his warmth for everyone in his 'Roadrunner family' as he liked to say. I always looked up to him (figuratively and literally) and like many others was in awe of him – it's hard not to be. Anytime he entered a room the entire tone changed and all eyes were instantly drawn to him. A colleague and I used to jokingly call him 'Lord God Steele' but after awhile it became the real way I addressed him. I wasn't making a joke when I used it and he never flinched when he heard me say it. It's an expression befitting of a great man."

Rumours of his death, terminal illness, and other speculations increased until the mystery was dispelled on the 2006 DVD *Symphony for the Devil*. Included in this DVD is an interview in which Peter briefly mentions his incarceration in Riker's Island and "the psych ward at Kings County Hospital", both stints apparently caused by his heavy substance abuse, for which he also served time on probation.

Peter is best remembered for his music with Type O Negative – seven albums spanning nearly more than 15 years: from 1991's *Slow Deep And Hard* to 2007's *Dead Again*.

As Monte concludes: "Peter struggled his whole life with his demons. Let's hope he is finally now at peace."

Pete Steele: January 4, 1962 – April 14, 2010. RIP.

P82 "I'VE ALWAYS BEEN SCREWED UP"
Suicidal Tendencies' Mike Muir explains how he's still screwed up, but not as much as he was.

THE BURNING QUESTION

A law is brought in that you're only allowed to bring one thing to a festival. It is:

To vote in next month's Burning Question go to...

www.metalhammer.co.uk/forum

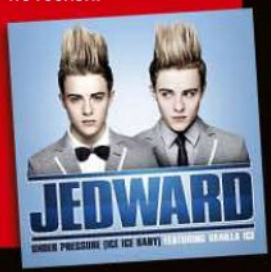
Holy Shit!

Music industry rumours, innuendo, and complete fucking lies.

Power metal shriekers across the globe pricked up their ears when news broke recently that DRAGONFORCE have parted ways with vocalist ZP Theart. Anyone genuinely interested in applying for the position should hurry along to www.dragonforce.com/audition and follow the instructions, but bear in mind that you will have to hit some insanely high notes while wearing very tight trousers, and it would help if your hair blows around dramatically when you stand in front of a wind machine. Trampoline experience is also essential. And a love of booze. And old computer games. And so on.

We're still rejoicing about the news that MURDERDOLLS are back, but we're even more excited about the fact that MÖTLEY CRÜE guitarist Mick Mars is due to make an appearance on the ghoulish ones' forthcoming new album. Mr Mars himself was so overjoyed at the opportunity that, according to reports, he demanded an extra sugar in his cocoa. Bless.

Finally, a little birdie tells us that SONISPHERE and DOWNLOAD are currently battling to secure the talents of witless chuffwipes JEDWARD as a special surprise for you lucky, lucky punters. Worth the ticket price alone, we reckon.



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WORLD NEWS

All the gossip from around planet metal!

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Sonisphere have announced another slew of great bands for this year's festival taking place at Knebworth from July 30–August 1 including special guests to Iron Maiden, Aussie ravers Pendulum who, despite their dance credentials, always slay at rock and metal festivals. Also added are Italian pop-metallers Lacuna Coil, returning grungers Alice In Chains and Irish rockers Therapy?, who will be playing their classic *Troublegum* album in its entirety. Europe, Terrorvision, Rise To Remain, Evile, Dir En Grey, Municipal Waste, Sick Of It All and Renegades (the guys from Feeder's new band) have also been added. The new additions join an already stellar cast of names including such luminaries as Alice Cooper, Mötley Crüe, The Cult, Iggy & The Stooges and even wild cards such as Placebo and Skunk Anansie. As for new talent, Bring Me The Horizon and Gallows set the tone, who will of course be joining headliners Rammstein and trustworthy crowd-crushers Slayer, Anthrax and Fear Factory. And don't forget that Mr Henry Rollins will be on hand with his spoken word set as well. Head to metalhammer.co.uk to get your tickets and watch out for all the latest additions!

SONISPHERE FESTIVAL

Lacuna Coil return to Sonisphere

Rise To Remain: they're taking over your town

TINA KORHONEN

POWER QUEST!

Two of the hottest new bands set to battle it out on the road to Download.

Metal Hammer has teamed up with Live Nation to put together a double-header tour to warm you up for this year's Download festival. Brit metal upstarts Rise To Remain and US retro-thrashers Holy Grail team up to co-headline Quest For Donington. Dates are: London Islington Bar Academy June 7, Wolverhampton Slade Rooms 8, Manchester Roadhouse 9, Glasgow King Tuts 10 and Download festival itself on June 12. The tour will also feature yet-to-be-confirmed special guests. Keep an eye on www.metal hammer.co.uk for announcements and to get your tickets.

Rise To Remain frontman Austin Dickinson tells *Hammer*: "I grew up listening to a lot of NWOBHM, so it's fantastic to hear a new band like Holy Grail making music in the more classic vein."

And Holy Grail vocalist/guitarist James Paul Luna admits: "This is a big deal considering no one in the UK has seen us play. I can't even use words to express how excited I am about shredding the UK – it's gonna be fucking awesome!"

As for Donington's rich heritage, none are ignorant:

"As far as I know Donington has a history of the most epic rock and metal shows ever, which gives me goosebumps to think of being out there," says James, "It's a true dream come true!" Austin – whose band have already played Donington – says: "We are incredibly excited and honoured to have the opportunity to play Download again and we can't wait to lay waste to the stage! Originally, I thought that we had been booked for the third/fourth stage, but finding out that we were on the second stage is a feeling that I don't think will be rivalled for some time... it's gonna be a riot!

What can fans expect on the night?

"Fans should expect their heads to get ripped off by shredding leads and blistering vocals," offers James before adding, "then their remains will be fed to the wolves."

"In this past year we've learnt a lot as a band," says Austin in reflective fashion. "From each other, from our peers and from the fans. So expect a lot of carnage and some great fun to accompany these shows! Expect a new song or two as well... We promise this will be Rise To Remain at our best yet!"

So while RTR will be showcasing some new songs, will Holy Grail be bringing any of their signature covers?

"We will definitely do one of the covers from our EP (Accept's *Fast As A Shark* and Judas Priest's *Exciter*), and quite possibly a new cover which hasn't been worked out yet."

Both bands have been hotly tipped by *Hammer* for metallic greatness; it'll be down to the bands to rip it up on the night to prove both mettle and metal. For tickets, festival updates and travel info go to: www.downloadfestival.co.uk.

ALBUMS OF THE MONTH

The albums that *Hammer* are scaring the neighbours with.

DEFTONES	DANZIG	TYPE O NEGATIVE	TYPE O NEGATIVE	TYPE O NEGATIVE	TYPE O NEGATIVE
Diamond Eyes	*III: HOW THE GODS KILL*	*Life Is Killing Me*	*Slow, Deep & Hard*	*October Rust*	*Origin Of The Feces*
Lewis Somerscales CRAYON JUNKIE	Caren Gibson CLAHNZIG	James Gill CONKER BOT	Jonathan Selzer REV ÜBERLORD	Vanessa Hards CATTLE PROD	James Isaacs PANTONE OF FUN

TYPE O NEGATIVE
October Rust

"14 years later this masterpiece still has the power to halt breaths and tingle spines. Pete Steele, RIP."

Alexander Milas
CAPO DEI CAPI

Metal Hammer tests metal's mettle with Monitor Audio. www.monitoraudio.co.uk

P66 SOULFLY
"Why would age stop me?"

P32 DEFTONES
"I never wanted to record another Deftones album"

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DON'T FORGET! GET YOUR TICKETS FOR THE HRH ROAD TRIP IBIZA FROM JUNE 2–9. JOIN *HAMMER* IN IBIZA TO WATCH WOLF, GRAND MAGUS, DIE APOKALYPTISCHEN REITER, ALESTORM, SKINDRED AND MORE. CALL 08700 110 034 FOR TICKETS AND GO TO WWW.METALHAMMER.CO.UK FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS.

GODS RIDE OUT!

Lineup announced for the Kawasaki *Metal Hammer* Golden Gods.

Sonic Syndicate: rocking the HMS Hammer

Airbourne: they're coming for you

Steel Panther: hosts with the most

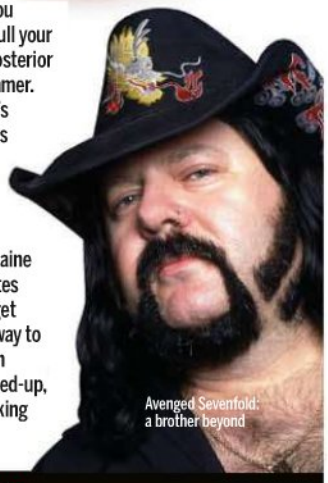
Skindred: destroy the dancefloor

ALEX MORGAN

The metal gods are smiling clearly, because we're very proud to announce that Kawasaki are now official sponsors of the 2010 *Metal Hammer* Golden Gods, and we can also confirm a whole host of acts who will be playing over the day to boot.

The day kicks off early with party boat HMS Hammer on the Thames setting sail with 300 loonies going mad, and this year will see sets afloat from Sweden's Sonic Syndicate, Vinnie Paul and his Southern metallers Hellyeah and fast-rising Brit upstarts Rise To Remain. At the awards proper, more than a thousand of you will get to witness live sets from Aus'n'roll quartet Airbourne, inimitable ragga metallers Skindred and heirs to the US metal throne Five Finger Death Punch. Timeless hair metallers Steel Panther will not only be playing but hosting the awards, so expect lots of bad (meaning good) language, hairspray and requests for boob-showing. There is also a very special guest yet to be announced – keep your eyes on www.metalhammer.co.uk for news.

Did we hear you say you hadn't voted yet?! Well pull your finger out son, get yon posterior to goldengods.metalhammer.co.uk and get clicking! It's all-out war: Rammstein vs Machine Head for best live band, Lamb Of God vs AC/DC for best international act and Zakk Wylde vs Dave Mustaine for riff lord! Only your votes can decide who wins so get voting! And it's the only way to be in with a chance to win tickets for the most boozed-up, ear-smashing, heavy fucking metal event of the year.



Avenged Sevenfold: a brother beyond

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P70 BLEEDING THROUGH "We're not going down without a fight!"

P76 ANNIHILATOR "It was only the UK and US who didn't care"

FIVE FREE HEAVY METAL TRACKS FOR METAL HAMMER READERS

mflow, the UK's newest social music app launches this month, and are giving Metal Hammer readers 5 free tunes by Meshuggah, Overkill, Arsis, Mnemic and Rage.

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HAMMER MELTDOWN

TOP 10

HEAVY METAL CHAT-UP LINES

10 THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH

"Would you be so kind as to join me in a quick headbang before retiring to my humble abode to look at my collection of NWOBHM seven-inch singles?"

9 THE DEZ DISPENSER

"You're looking amazing tonight, darling, so to celebrate that fact, I wanna see a really fuckin' big circlepit kicking off right now! COME OOOOONNNN!!!!!!"

8 THE WICKED WINDMILL

No words required for this one, as Shadows Fall's Brian Fair rotates his dreadlocks, lassoing helpless ladies as he whips up a storm of slightly smelly matted cack.

7 THE BRIAN

"Good evening. I am the God Of Fuck. I will now stumble about, slurring my words and looking chubby and pale. Check out my spooky eye! I'm basically irresistible, aren't I?"

6 THE LOINCLOTH SURPRISE

"I am Conan, oiled and ready for your delight and pleasure, madam! Underneath this loincloth lies the key to the gates of Valhalla! And my plums!"

5 THE JASTA

"NOW! IS THE TIME! FOR ME TO BUY! YOU! A DRINK! AND THEN HOPEFULLY! COP A SNOG! A BIT LATER! POSSIBLY!"

4 THE VARG SELL

"How do you fancy assisting me in my mission to maintain the purity of my Northern European culture and heritage by, you know, having a quick fumble an' that?"

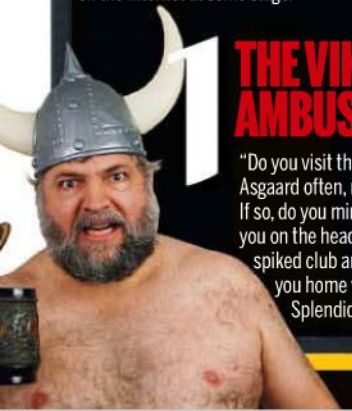
3 THE CALL OF THE WYLDE

"How the fuck would you motherfuckin' like to hang the fuck out with me and drink some fuckin' beer? You fuckin' would? That's fuckin' awesome. Fuck!"

2 THE DURST OF BOTH WORLDS

"Come back to mine, I'll record you on my phone camera and turn it back on my O-face. It may appear on the Internet at some stage."

1 THE VIKING AMBUSH



"Do you visit the gates of Asgaard often, my lovely? If so, do you mind if I hit you on the head with this spiked club and take you home with me? Splendid!"

Trigger The Bloodshed: is three the magic number?

Mixing Desk

In the studio with...

TRIGGER THE BLOODSHED

Hammer went to the studio to witness the creation of Trigger's new opus.

Continuing to fly the flag for British death metal, Trigger The Bloodshed have just finished work on their third album, *Degenerate*. Largely recorded in the UK but finished off and mixed at Hansen Studios in Denmark by renowned engineer Jacob Hansen (Hatesphere, Fear My Thoughts, Heaven Shall Burn), this is the band's third album in three years and promises to be their most successful to date. As vocalist Jonny Burgan explains, when the ideas are coming thick and fast, you might as well hit the studio and get to work...

"I guess we've just got a lot of drive and we're always writing music," he says. "We just want to get the new songs out there. We play live a lot and we want as much material as possible. This album is a real progression for us and it adds a lot of variety to what we do. We progress really fast because we write so much and we want to keep smashing albums out to show everyone what we're all about."

An eight-song barrage of crushing brutality and vicious riffing, *Degenerate* is both the heaviest and most accessible record that Trigger The Bloodshed have made to date. It also sounds enormous; something that Jonny primarily attributes to Jacob Hansen's mixing skills.

"Jesus Christ, he knows his stuff!" he laughs. "We really pushed for this album to be mixed somewhere with someone who was familiar with really brutal music and who knew how to bring the best out of us. Jacob has worked with Pestilence and Aborted and loads of death metal bands and he's done a really good job capturing what we're about. A lot of albums these days sound great, but they're a little bit too pristine and clinical for us. Jacob's maintained a live vibe to it, which is wicked. We're really proud of it."

"It's about how we are treated and controlled by older generations"

Following on from the social commentary that dominated lyrics on 2009's *The Great Depression* album, *Degenerate* again centres around Jonny's intense view of the world and includes songs about religious indoctrination (*Hollow Prophecy*), population control (*De-breed*) and drug abuse among young people (*Dead Vein*). But despite its heavy conceptual edge, the new album is still 100 per cent death metal to the core.

"It's about how young people are viewed by the rest of society," says the singer. "And how we are treated and controlled by older generations. But the album is also about mega-hooks and massive riffs! The last album was about trying to write better songs, which I think we managed to do well, but we wanted to take that one step further this time. It's all about the riffs on this album, and making everything catchy and heavy as fuck. I think it's all panned out pretty well!"

SCUZZ

Music and videos for metalheads. 24/7!

May 2010 is the big Scuzz UK vs USA season. The channel will be showcasing the best of both worlds, playing off genres/bands/scenes against each other. May 15 at midnight is the *Megadeth Videography* in which Megadave stops by to present every Megadeth video in their full uncut glory! May 18 at 2pm is *Top 40: Stateside Anthems* and *Top 40: Homegrown Anthems* at 7pm. May 19 at 9pm is *Back To The Eighties*, featuring a ton of classic acts: Cinderella to Ratt, Metal Church to Guns N' Roses, Van Halen to Saxon. May 25 at 11pm is *Metal Gods: Tony Iommi*. The Story behind Black Sabbath's *Heaven And Hell* album. Tony talks us through the highs and lows behind making the album, the touring cycle, Ozzy leaving and the introduction of Dio. May 27 at 11pm is the second in the series: *Metal Gods: Judas Priest*, celebrating the 30th anniversary of *British Steel*, and Priest tell the story behind it. *The Metal Hammer Chart* goes out at 10pm on Sundays and 1am on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays each week.

P86 "I'M NOT REALLY WELSH. I JUST WANT TO BE LIKE LOSTPROPHETS"
Ragga punks Skindred field questions about the authenticity of their Welsh – and metal – heritage in the Spanish Inquisition.

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"YES, IT'S INGENIOUS. BETTER THAN THAT, IT'S BLOODY AMAZING"
STUFF MAGAZINE

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UNDER THE COVERS

Notes on metal's best sleeves

SLAYER

Divine Intervention

Artist: Wes Benscoter

There are few jobs more exciting for an aspiring young metalhead artist than the task of creating an album cover for Slayer. As the legends prepared to unleash *Divine Intervention*, their sixth studio album, they felt it was time for an aesthetic change. Charged with stepping into the shoes of Larry Carroll, who'd created iconic covers for *Reign In Blood* amongst others, Wes Benscoter seized the opportunity.

"I was doing work for Slayer's merch company and I made it known that I really wanted to do artwork for them," he recalls. "So my portfolio was passed on to the band; they had me work on a few t-shirt designs and we started talking about the album cover. This was during the era of grunge; most rock artists were more interested in doing Pearl Jam gig posters than painting demons for metal bands. I guess I was at the right place at the right time."

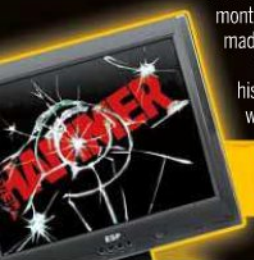
In stark contrast to the somewhat surreal and grim artwork of previous Slayer covers, Wes's work was vivid, precise and very much in keeping with the band's desire to move forward and evolve in visual terms. A potent, symmetrical image containing an inverted pentagram, a skull, a skeleton and swords, the *Divine Intervention* cover could hardly have been any more appropriate.

"My portfolio had a few paintings that contained elements that fitted the concept," Wes says. "So the band combined them with a new twist and we came up with a design. It was painted freehand with an airbrush, except for some brushwork on the stars. My only concern was getting the image to the band's satisfaction. If I was left to my own devices, I would have crowded demons into every corner. I think the band were right to keep it relatively simple and direct."

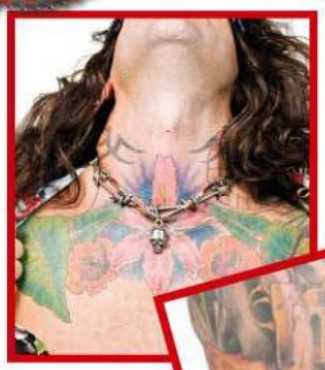
Divine Intervention helped to maintain the band's fearsome reputation and Wes's artwork contributed greatly to its impact.

"Some of my Slayer t-shirt designs were better illustrations, but I still have a soft spot for it," says the artist. "I still get a few emails about it every month, so I guess it's made its mark."

To see more of his work, see www.wesbenscoter.com



DON'T FORGET *HAMMER* EDITOR ALEXANDER MILAS PRESENTS THE *METAL HAMMER* MAGAZINE SHOW ON ROCK RADIO ON METAL MONDAYS, 8-11PM. LISTEN ONLINE AT WWW.ROCKRADIO.CO.UK



DOWNLOAD

Stix Zadinia
Steel Panther

TATT LIFE

Stars and their ink

ROB MONK

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST TATTOO?

"It was the sun on my left shoulder. I got it in San Francisco at 222 Tattoo. Scott Silvia did it. I walked in and said, 'I want a big-ass tattoo.' And that was the beginning of the end for me."

YOU DIDN'T GIVE HIM ANY MORE GUIDELINES THAN, "I WANT A BIG-ASS TATTOO"?

"No. I said, 'I want a big tattoo – what have you got?' He said, "How about a sun?' I go, 'Let's do it.' After that it was all downhill. The second one was a continuation and so on. And as your readers will see in the pictures, I still have a lot of work to do."

TELL US ABOUT THE ONE ON YOUR NECK.

"Oh wait, because of what you just brought up: tattoo dos and don'ts: if you're wearing a tuxedo, what's going to show and what's not? Because that's the most clothes you're ever gonna fucking wear: the highest collar and the longest coat. Once you go past the tuxedo line, you're fucked if you want to be normal. My first-past-the-tuxedo-line tattoo was on my hand. The ones on my neck and the back of my head – I was already gone by then. I had already surrendered to completely fucking the establishment by that point. This tattoo says, 'I don't want to work for you even if I'm here'. And I liked the way it looked on the neck. It's definitely not a bullshit area to get tattooed. You know what also really sucks? Behind the knee and on the shin."

THAT'S A NICE PIECE, THOUGH – WHO DID IT?

"Kat Von D. She did my whole right lower leg. She's actually a fan of the band and she's one of the coolest fucking chicks. She's tattooed three out of the four of us: Lexxi, Michael and me and she's super-talented."

DID YOU DO THE *LA INK* TV SHOW THEN?

"No. The other three guys had been on it, but I was tired and stayed home. I kinda wish I'd gone now, but she tattooed me on a Saturday when she wasn't doing the show. It's not a fluke that she's successful and you've got to have the right person for the job. If you can't draw, don't try to be a tattoo artist."

ARE YOU PLANNING ON GETTING MORE?

"Many! I've got to finish this cobra on my neck. I'm not looking forward to it because it's gonna hurt like fuck. I've been tattooed on Vicodin, weed, blow... actually blow worked pretty good if you do enough of it, but I'm not condoning it."

DID YOU EVER WAKE UP WITH A TATTOO YOU DON'T REMEMBER GETTING?

"Me, Lexxi, Kat Von D and a bunch of other people went out after one of our shows and we all ended up at a tattoo place in Vegas called Last Chance Tattoo. They wanted to do party tattoos and I was fucked up, but not fucked up enough to let somebody do a tattoo on me at 5am. I tattooed a 'D' on Lexxi's hand because it was the only thing I could think of. It's really fucked up – all thin and stupid and it stands for 'dickhead'."

WHICH TATTOO HAS THE MOST MEANING TO YOU?

"Probably my neck because it says so much. It says that I'm in it for life because there's no fucking hiding it."

TATT-DOs AND TATT-DON'Ts

"Never get a chick's name. Or your kid's name. Imagine if you were fucking Jeffrey Dahmer's dad... well not fucking his dad but if you were his dad and you had his name on you! Guys should get something that's a talking point for a chick, like a flower or a Steel Panther logo."

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CHAIN LINKS

Random crap that *Hammer* staffers emailed each other when they were supposed to be working.

KORN REBORN

Search for 'korn oildale toronto' on youtube.com

The nu metal kings have new material and they've been sharing it with their fans across the pond. The good news is, it's fucking heavy. Welcome back.

CLASH OF THE TITANS

Search for 'slash lemmy doctor' on youtube.com

What do you get if you cross the indestructible Lemmy with the relentlessly cool Slash? You get rock'n'roll... loud, dirty and awesome. With extra hats.

BLACK BEAUTY

Search for 'slayer beauty order official' on youtube.com

Would it be wrong if we confessed to sporting a particularly impressive collective semi after watching the new Slayer video? But this is art, right? Phew.

INSANE MUSTAINE

Search for 'megadeth right insane' on youtube.com

His fiery temper is certainly no secret, but we thought Dave Mustaine had calmed down recently. But no, he's driving a tank! Yet another reason to worship Megadeth.

BLACK METAL SAX APPEAL

Search for 'Ihsahn Inferno festival shores' on youtube.com

His new album is so good that we expect his forthcoming London gig to be a highlight of the year. Here he is in action at Oslo's Inferno Festival last month. Epic.

Seen a link that made you laugh? Send it to chainmail@futurenet.co.uk and check www.metalhammer.co.uk/blog for the list of *Hammer*-approved crap.

HAMMER Defenders of the Faith

Hammer salutes...

Monte (second from right) with the family: at the Roadrunner Utd concert 2005

Robb Flynn: one of Monte's most successful charges

Monte Connor

As head of A&R for Roadrunner, Monte Connor has signed the biggest names in metal.

While many of you may not know the name, you know Monte Connor's work: Slipknot, Sepultura, Trivium, Devildriver... ring any bells? Monte works at Roadrunner US where for 22 years he has signed some of the biggest metal bands. But it was all a bit of an accident...

"I had a conservative upbringing so never thought music to be a real job option. I did maths at college, but I put more effort into the school radio station. I hosted an underground metal show from 1982-86 and played Metallica and Megadeth before they had record deals. It polished my A&R skills."

It wasn't long before Monte was snapped up by radio promotions people and soon arrived at Roadrunner in December 1987. The then-A&R guy quit five days into Monte's tenure, who, as the only metalhead, became the new A&R person by default.

Within a year he had signed Sepultura, Annihilator and Obituary.

"My first big success was Sepultura. Not sales-wise at first, as Annihilator's *Alice In Hell* outsold the first Sepultura album, but by the time *Arise* came out, Sepultura were big news."

Monte went on to sign Machine Head, Fear Factory, Trivium, Soulfly, Coal Chamber, Stone Sour, Murderdolls, Life Of Agony, Deicide and many more. Among his triumphs, which include Type O's *Bloody Kisses* earning the label's first US gold album and his "biggest signing ever" with Slipknot, Monte cites The Roadrunner Utd project (an all-star collaboration of RR supremos past and present) as his favourite moment:

"I experienced what it was like to be in a band, 'cos when I read the reviews I felt like it was a review of *my* CD. And that was just the album – the concert was something else entirely!"

So what do you look for in a new band?

"Originality. It needs to inspire me and get me excited." For those wanting to follow in his footsteps, Monte simply says, "You can't study to be an A&R person. It's an inherent ability. Though anyone who is well-versed in an emerging scene right before or as it breaks, is putting themselves in a good position to get their foot in the door. But trends come and go and you have to be able to adapt and expand your expertise.'

Happy hunting!

Do you have a tatt, pic with a star or a story worthy of our salute? If so, email...

CHAINMAIL@FUTURENET.CO.UK

SHOOTING STARS

AMON AMARTH's Johan Hegg with Steph Jones

Terrence Hobbs with SUFFOCATION

FAN TATTS

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STUCK for something mindblowing to do on 25, 26 and 27 June? Well, Sunparks and *Metal Hammer* have the perfect prize for you! The partnership gives you the chance to win four VIP tickets to this year's Graspop festival (currently celebrating its 15th anniversary), a P&O ferry ride for you and your car, and accommodation in a Sunparks villa. The ferry will be Dover to Calais, which is just two-and-a-half hours' drive from Sunparks Kempense Meren in Belgium!

Sunparks holiday villages boast some of the best activities, facilities and accommodation. There's something for everyone, from river kayaking to bike trails (including up to 3000km of car-free cycle routes), and loads of watersports at the massive lake in nearby Mol – everything you could want, from diving to windsurfing. Sunparks holiday villages are set in some of the most beautiful environs in Europe, including Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands, so whether you choose to hop on your bike and explore in the sun, or relax in the indoor heated swimming pool if the sun doesn't shine, it'll still be the perfect break.

...Not least if you're coming home from one of Europe's best rock festivals! 2010's lineup boasts Devildriver, Mastodon, Fear Factory, Motörhead and many more over three days. And because Sunparks Kempense Meren is approximately seven minutes from the Graspop site, you could even hire a bike to get there! If you're a regular to the European festivals, it's worth checking out other Sunparks nearby – they're the affordable, clever alternative to getting a bad night's sleep in a tent! Pukkelpop and Cactusfestival in Belgium are both less than 40 minutes away and, the Sunparks Eifel is only ten minutes from the mighty Rock Am Ring!

So you come back from moshing to Motörhead to a hot pool, a warm bath or simply a quiet bed. Perfect. And anything you miss in the evening is waiting for you in the morning before the carnage ensues again. And if there's nothing on for a few hours at the festival, you can always get busy in the village with one of the many activities. The villas are all self-catering so you can cook up a storm in the morning – all are fully equipped to make a full English (or Continental of course). All you have to do to enter is answer the following question correctly:

IN WHICH COUNTRY IS GRASPOP HELD?

TO WIN, SIMPLY GO TO WWW.FUTURECOMPS.CO.UK/SUNPARKS AND ENTER YOUR DETAILS. PLEASE VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR A FULL LIST OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY.

● *Sunparks are offering* Metal Hammer *readers an exclusive 5% off when you quote SP1286 – book online at www.sunparks.co.uk or call 0845 351 0109. The 5% offer is combinable with early-booking discounts of up to 20% but not available on last-minute deals. For more information on which festivals are near to the Sunparks holiday villages, visit www.sunparks.co.uk/promotions/european_festivals.*

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EXODUS

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KYUSS

Josh Homme: long before QOTSA came into being

SETLIST

Conan Troutman / Gardenia / Thumb / Whitewater / Green Machine / Odyssey / Do Not Feed The Oyster / Hurricane / Supa Scoopa And The Mighty Scoop / El Rodeo / Molten Universe / Freedom Run / One Inch Man / 100 Degrees / Writhe / 50 Million Year Trip / N.O. / Allen's Wrench

THE BORDERLINE, LONDON MAY 20, 1994

Words: Mörat.

While some shows are little more than a night out and an excuse to get pissed, there are those that have become the stuff of legend, the holy grail of rock'n'roll. You'll know them by the number of people who claim to have been there and the comparative size of the venue; the smaller the venue, the bigger the legend. So, Kyuss at the Borderline, their first ever UK show; you were there, right? You and the other 10,000 people who claim to have been crammed into a place that holds maybe 300, tops, and that's if they're fully lubed and playing sardines! The fact is that not many people in the UK ever got to see the mighty Kyuss play live and, not that it wasn't packed, even fewer were at the Borderline.

The band first showed on the radar, a minor blip in the UK rock press, in 1992 with their classic *Blues For The Red Sun*, the kind of thing fans would have to hunt for despite its only competitor being Monster Magnet's *Spine Of God*. By 1994 word of these drug-crazed desert rats had given them both a reputation and a cult following that remains to this day. There were tales of wild generator parties out in the Mojave where there is no law and frontman John Garcia doing so much acid that he thought he was a horse, but not much was really known about Kyuss other than their freakishly heavy sound – partly a product of playing those desert parties – and that they had come to save us from a rash of uncool mainstream tosh.

But even to know that much, you had to hunt (no internet, see). The band didn't like doing press, but that was okay because they'd accidentally ended up on a major label who had no clue what to do with them anyway. Kyuss were – and still are – an enigma.

So it was an elite band of rockers and misfits who packed the Borderline that night, high on whisky, weed and expectation and jammed in so tight that the crowd swayed as one and the ceiling sweated. And when Kyuss hit that tiny stage, the place simply erupted. The setlist opposite is merely a guide, culled from another show in '94, as the band had stopped using them by then, though when asked today guitarist Josh Homme remembers being surprised that there was anyone at the show at all. It must have been quite a shock then when he drifted into that magnificent opening riff from *Thumb* and the crowd knew every word, particularly with that overwhelming desert sound being forced into such an intimate venue. Not only that, just imagine the thunder that was coming up through the bare feet of bassist Scott Reeder!

But maybe it's better that some things are remembered rather than documented because sometimes that's how they stay special. Kyuss knew that well enough to quit in 1995 before anyone had really caught on – but nonetheless spawning a thousand imitators across the globe (and their influence has yet to dwindle). Chances are that they're never coming back either and no matter how much you love them, you know that's right.

The pit

I ♥ KYUSS

BEN WARD
ORANGE GOBLIN

"Kyuss were light years ahead – they pretty much invented stoner rock. By combining the 'couldn't give a fuck' attitude of Black Flag with Sabbath's downtuned heaviness, they stumbled upon a formula that was a blueprint for every band that followed. They could be bone-jarringly heavy one minute then blissfully chilled-out the next. I saw them live in 1995 and was blown to the back wall by their sheer power! It was like being smashed in the face by a riff tidal wave! I'm lucky enough now to be able to call every member of Kyuss a good friend. We had John Garcia sing on *Coup De Grace* and Scott Reeder produced the album for us. I can't recommend them enough to people."

ORANGE GOBLIN PLAY HIGH VOLTAGE IN JULY

GIGS THAT'LL SOON BE SHAPING OUR WORLD...

65DAYSOFSTATIC
Birmingham Academy 2 May 5, Sheffield Octagon 6, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 7, Bristol Trinity 8, Cambridge Junction 9, Portsmouth Wedgewood Rooms 10, Plymouth White Rabbit 11, London Camden Koko 12, Belfast Mandela Hall 14, Dublin Crawdaddy 15, Cork Cyprus Avenue 16.

ACCEPT
London Islington Academy May 26.

AGAINST ME!
London Highbury Garage June 1, Manchester Academy 3 2, Birmingham Academy 2 3.

ANATHEMA
London Islington Academy May 21.

ARCHITECTS
Birmingham Academy 2 October 1, Manchester Club Academy 2, Glasgow Garage 3, Newcastle Academy 2 4, Nottingham Rescue Rooms 6, Norwich Waterfront 7, London Camden Koko 8, Bristol Anson Rooms 9.

BILBAO FESTIVAL
With Pearl Jam, Rammstein and Slayer. Bilbao, Spain July 8-10. Go to www.bilbaobbklive.com for details.

BLACK SPIDERS
Brighton Engine Rooms May 5, Exeter Cavern 6, Southampton Talking Heads 7, Tunbridge Wells Forum 8.

BLESSED BY A BROKEN HEART
Peterborough Met Lounge May 14, Birmingham Eddies 15, Nottingham Rock City 16, London Camden Underworld 17, Sheffield Corporation 18, Leeds Josephs Well 19, Cardiff Clwb Ifor Bach 20, Plymouth White Rabbit 21.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
BLOODSTOCK OPEN AIR
With Heaven & Hell, Behemoth, Devin Townsend and more. Derbyshire Catton Hall August 13-15.

BOLT THROWER
Wrexham Central Station May 5, Birmingham Asylum 6.

THE BRONX
Cambridge Junction May 12.

CARNIFEX
Plymouth White Rabbit May 30, London Camden Underworld 31, Manchester Academy 3 June 1, Birmingham Academy 3 2.

THE CHARIOT
London Camden Underworld May 9, Manchester Moho Live 10, Leeds Rios 11, Glasgow Ivory Blacks 12, Middlesbrough Keys 13, Southampton Joiners 14, Plymouth White Rabbit 15.

CHROME HOOF
Birmingham Hare & Hounds May 20, Bristol Thekla 21, Brighton Audio 22, Liverpool Kazimier 28, Leeds Brudenell Social Club 29, Glasgow Sub Club 30.

COHEED AND CAMBRIA
Glasgow ABC June 22, Newcastle Academy 23, London Kentish Town Forum 24.

CONVERGE
Brighton Concorde 2 July 10, Plymouth White Rabbit 11, Dublin Whelans 12, Birmingham Academy 2 13, Glasgow Garage 14, Manchester Academy 2 15, London Euston IIIU 16.

CYPRESS HILL
London Brixton Academy June 15, Glasgow Academy 16.

DEATH ANGEL
London Islington Academy May 18.

DEVIL SOLD HIS SOUL
Peterborough Hellfire Club May 7, Bristol Croft 31, Manchester Moho Live June 1, Glasgow King Tuts 2, Nottingham Rock City Basement 3.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
DOWNLOAD
With AC/DC, Rage Against The Machine, Aerosmith and more. East Midlands Donington Park June 11-13.

ESOTERICA
Wakefield Music Festival May 15, Silverstone MotoGP June 18, Wyeside Music Festival 19.

EVERGREEN TERRACE
Bristol Croft June 27, Manchester Moho Live 28, Glasgow Ivory Blacks 29, Middlesbrough Keys 30, Plymouth White Rabbit July 1, London Camden Underworld 2.

EVERY TIME I DIE
Colchester Arts Centre September 21, Plymouth White Rabbit 22, Manchester Moho Live 23, Sheffield Corporation 24, London Islington Academy 25.

FOZZY
Glasgow Cathouse May 13, Nottingham Rock City Basement 14, London Highbury Garage 15.

GAMA BOMB
Grimsby Matrix May 5, Islington Bar Academy 6, Brighton Engine Rooms 7, Derby Old Bell 9.

JOHN GARCIA
Dublin Andrews Lane Theatre May 28, London Camden Electric Ballroom July 6.

GHOSTFEST
With Gallows, Devil Sold His Soul, Lower Than Atlantis, The Eyes Of A Traitor, TRC and more. Leeds University Union June 26-27.

HAMMERFALL
Wolverhampton Wulfrun Hall May 5, London Camden Electric Ballroom 6.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
HARD ROCK HELL ROAD TRIP TO IBIZA
Featuring Skindred, Wolf, Grand Magus, The Quireboys and more. Ibiza June 2-9.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
HARD ROCK HELL IV
With Skid Row, MSG, LA Guns and more. Prestatyn Sands Pontins December 3-5.

THE HAUNTED
Sheffield Academy May 28, Hatfield Attic June 1.

HELL ON EARTH TOUR
With Terror, Every Time I Die, All Shall Perish and more. Reading Sub 89 September 19, Norwich Waterfront 20, Colchester Arts Centre 21, Plymouth White Rabbit 22, Manchester Moho Live 23, Sheffield Corporation 24, Islington Academy 25.

HELLFIRE CLUB
With The Ghost Of A Thousand, The Eyes Of A Traitor, Devil Sold His Soul and more. Peterborough Park May 7-9.

HEVY FESTIVAL
With Gallows, Sick Of It All, Sepultura, Rolo Tomassi, Napalm Death and more. Kent Port Lympne Wild Animal Park August 6-8.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
HIGH VOLTAGE FESTIVAL
With Down, ZZ Top, Black Label Society, Clutch, Heaven & Hell with more tbc. London Hackney Victoria Park July 24-25.

HOLE
London Brixton Academy May 5, Birmingham Academy 9.

I AM GHOST
Leeds Rios May 18, London Camden Underworld 20, Peterborough Met Lounge 21.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
IHSAHN
London Camden Electric Ballroom August 19.

INME
Wakefield Rock Festival May 16, Plymouth White Rabbit 19, Poole Chords 20, Cardiff Barfly 21, Liverpool Masque 22, Wrexham Central Station 23, York Fibbers 24, Middlesbrough Crown 27, Wolverhampton Little Civic 28, Margate West Coast Rock Bar 29, Cambridge Junction 30, Leeds Josephs Well 31.

KISS
Birmingham LG Arena May 5, Dublin O2 Arena 7, Glasgow SECC 9, Manchester MEN Arena 10, London Wembley Arena 12-13.

MALEFICE
Dundee Dexters May 19, Middlesbrough Crown 20, Leeds Rios 21, London Camden Underworld 22, Wrexham Central Station 24, Bournemouth Champions 28, Plymouth White Rabbit 29, Exeter Cavern 30.

METALLICA
Belfast Odyssey Arena May 11-12.

THE MORE I SEE
Rushden Attic May 15.

MOUTH OF THE ARCHITECT
Sheffield Corporation May 9, Leeds Josephs Well 10, Bristol Croft 11, London Underworld 12.

NEVERMORE
London Islington Academy May 18.

PENNYWISE
Bristol Academy May 11, Leeds Academy 12, Newcastle Academy 13, Glasgow ABC 14, Birmingham Academy 15, London Shepherds Bush Empire 16.

PRIMORDIAL
Belfast Decade Of Aggressions @ Limelight May 8.

HAMMER-SPONSORED!
QUEST FOR DOWNLOAD
With Rise To Remain and Holy Grail. London Islington Bar Academy June 7, Wolverhampton Slade Rooms 8, Manchester Roadhouse 9, Glasgow King Tuts 10, Download Festival 12.

RATT
Islington Academy June 15, Belfast Spring & Airbrake 16, Wolverhampton Little Civic 17.

SABATON
With Alestorm. Manchester Academy 2 October 11, Glasgow Garage 12, London Camden Electric Ballroom 14, Wolverhampton Slade Rooms 15, Sheffield Corporation 16, Brighton Concorde 2 17.

SLAM DUNK FESTIVAL
New Found Glory, Skindred, Capdown, Four Year Strong, Set Your Goals and more. Hatfield University Of Hertfordshire May 29, Leeds University 30.

SLAVES TO GRAVITY
Brighton Engine Rooms May 5, Exeter Cavern 6, Southampton Talking Heads 7, Tunbridge Wells Forum 8.

SLAYER
Leeds Academy May 26, Glasgow Barrowland 27, Birmingham Academy 29, Manchester Academy 30, Nottingham Rock City 31, London Kentish Town Forum June 2-3.

SONISPHERE
With Iron Maiden, Rammstein and more. Knebworth July 30-August 1.

SOULFLY
Southampton Brook May 16, London Islington Academy 17, Preston 53 Degrees 18, Edinburgh Studio 24 19, York Duchess 20, Wrexham Central Station 21, Northampton Roadmenders 22.

SOURVEIN
London Old Street South Of The Border May 5, Nottingham Rock City 6.

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
London Brixton Academy June 16.

STRIKE ANYWHERE
Bristol Academy May 11, Leeds Academy 12, Newcastle Academy 13, London Shepherds Bush Empire 16.

TRIGGER THE BLOODSHED
Huddersfield Parish May 20, Dundee Hustlers 21, Glasgow Classic Grand 22, Aberdeen Tunnels, 23, Newcastle Academy 2 25, Birmingham Eddies 26, Leeds Josephs Well 27, Milton Keynes Sno Bar 28, Sheerness Ivy Leaf Bar 29, Brighton Freebutt 30, Winchester Railway 31, Exeter Cavern June 1.

UNEARTH
Colchester Arts Centre June 10.

WAKEFIELD ROCK FESTIVAL
With Pitchshifter, InMe, Senser, Esoterica, Panic Cell and more. Ossett Ingfield May 15-16.

WEEDEATER
With Black Cobra and Saviours. Plymouth White Rabbit June 14, Leeds Josephs Well 15, Liverpool Korova 16, London Camden Underworld 17.

More at ebookfree.download.net or www.ebookfree.download.com

On your free CD!

Released on April 14, 1980, Judas Priest's *British Steel* isn't just a landmark album that brought heavy metal into the mainstream, it laid down a visual and sonic template that's become metal's defining moment, turning frontman Rob Halford into The Metal God and inspiring legions of high-pitched, leather'n'stud-sheathed disciples ever since. *Metal Hammer* is immoderately proud to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the album that gave us *Breaking The Law* and *Living After Midnight* by offering this unique tribute CD. A host of inspired metal luminaries have gathered to offer their own interpretation of the nine tracks that, collectively, changed the face of heavy metal forever.

METAL HAMMER
A tribute to
JUDAS PRIEST

1 FIREWIND
BREAKING THE LAW
Mixed and mastered by Fredrik Nordström at Studio Fredman, Sweden. *The Premonition* is out now via Century Media.
www.firewind.gr

2 TRIGGER THE BLOODSHED
RAPID FIRE
Degenerate is out May 24 via Rising Records.
www.myspace.com/triggerthebloodshed

3 THAUROROD
METAL GODS
Upon Haunted Battlefields is out soon via Noise Art.
www.thaurorod.com

4 BLEED FROM WITHIN
GRINDER
Empire is out on May 10 via Rising Records.
www.myspace.com/bleedfromwithin

5 ARTHEMIS
UNITED
Heroes is due out in June via Scarlet Records.
www.arthemismusic.com

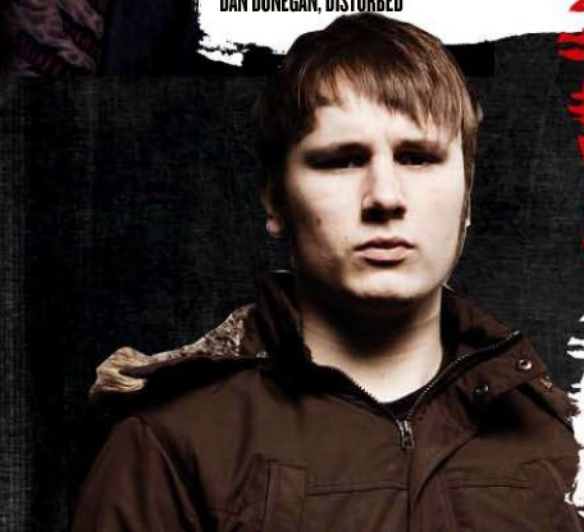
6 DISTURBED
LIVING AFTER MIDNIGHT
Disturbed's new album is due out this summer.
www.disturbed1.com/

7 IMICUS
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE OLD TO BE WISE
Animal Factory is out on May 24 via Transcend.
www.myspace.com/imicus

8 RISE TO REMAIN
THE RAGE
The Bridges Will Burn EP is out now via Search And Destroy.
www.myspace.com/risetoremain

9 STEELWING
STEELER
Lord Of The Wasteland is out now via Noise Art.
www.myspace.com/steelwing

"Judas Priest were a great inspiration growing up! They had it all: great riffs, powerful vocals with a crazy range, amazing hooks, leather and spikes. They pioneered an image that you picture in your minds when you hear the words 'heavy metal'. We had the honour of sharing the stage with them a couple of years ago in Sweden and Austria. Rob spoke to us as if we've known each other for years! Scott Travis has been out to a number of our shows in the US over the years and is an amazing guy. We are very excited to be able to contribute a track to the anniversary of the *British Steel* album."
DAN DONEGAN, DISTURBED



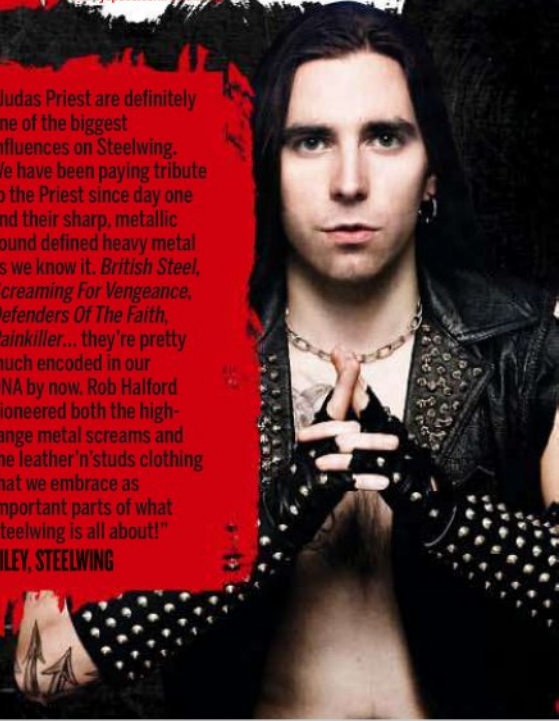
"Judas Priest have always been one of my favourite bands. They forged their own metal sound that still echoes to this day and has influenced generations. No doubt, their songs are hymns we all grew up with! We are honoured that we have the chance to pay tribute to one of the biggest and most influential bands of all time and especially on *Metal Hammer*. After all, this is the country where it all started! I hope the fans dig our way of paying tribute to the real *British Steel*!"
GUS G, FIREWIND

"It was a great experience doing the cover of *Metal Gods*. We knew that we would be doomed to fail if we tried to do it just like the original so we decided to do it our own way but still respecting the original version."
PASI TANSKANEN, THAURODROD

"Judas Priest, to us (and the general population of Earth) are one of the original heavy metal bands, the innovators and the creators of some of the most iconic riffs in history. Halford can also wail at a volume and pitch that unlocks high-security vaults... Covering *The Rage* was a really different experience for us, as we reworked it on the road and pretty much recorded it the day after we got off tour. So, we had a lot of post-tour fire in our bellies, and we're very happy with how it turned out – although there's always a sense of treading on hallowed ground when you cover a song by Priest!"
AUSTIN DICKINSON, RISE TO REMAIN

"*British Steel* is seen today as one of the most iconic albums in heavy metal history. So, naturally, it is a monumental honour for us to be involved in a tribute to what is regarded as the definitive album of its genre. Given the privilege to cover *You Don't Have To Be Old To Be Wise*, we were reluctant to deviate too far from the original track but we wanted to add the Imicus stamp to the song, which I feel we have achieved."
DAN BAKER, IMICUS

"Judas Priest are definitely one of the biggest influences on Steelwing. We have been paying tribute to the Priest since day one and their sharp, metallic sound defined heavy metal as we know it. *British Steel*, *Screaming For Vengeance*, *Defenders Of The Faith*, *Painkiller*... they're pretty much encoded in our DNA by now. Rob Halford pioneered both the high-range metal screams and the leather'n'studs clothing that we embrace as important parts of what Steelwing is all about!"
RILEY, STEELWING



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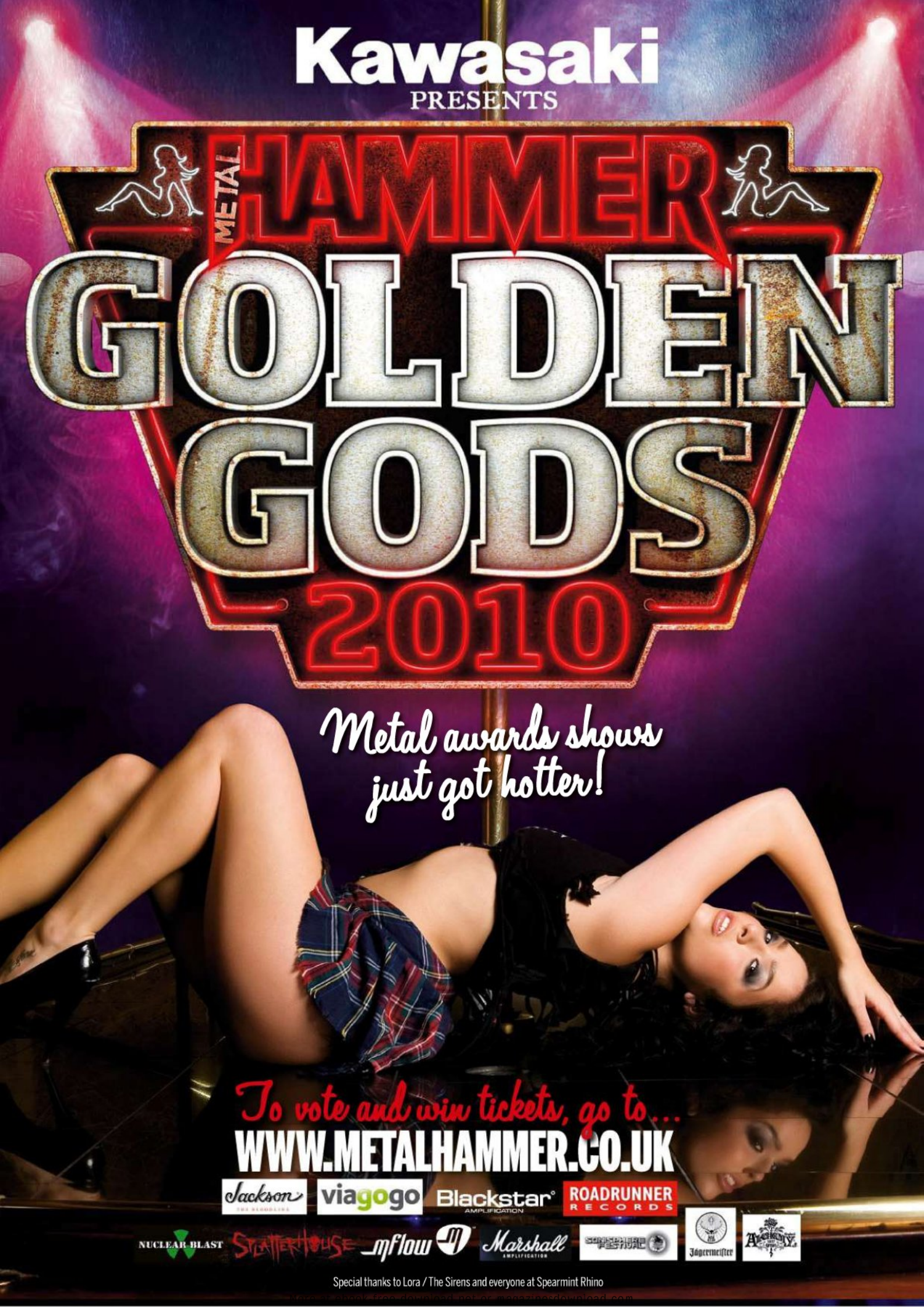
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Blag It

B-O-A 2010

Safe Blood

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A) Gorgoroth (text BLAG1 A to 87474)
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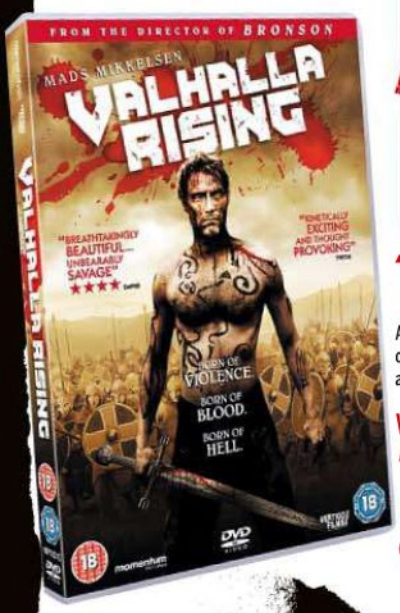
Rise! Rise!



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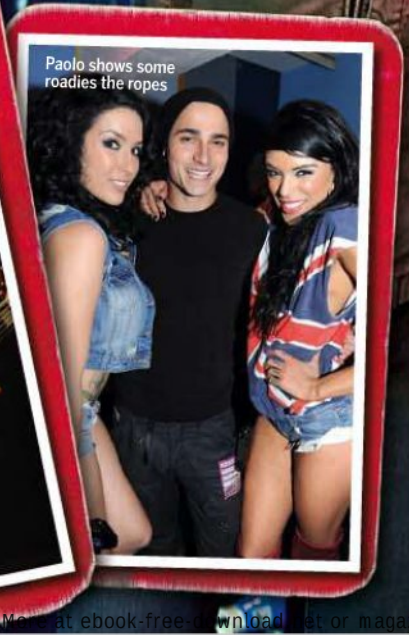
BEHIND METAL'S DIRTY CURTAIN

TRIVIUM
LONDON, MARCH 2010

Matt Heafy leads the charge


Paolo shows some roadies the ropes

"ME AND PAOLO MET THIS STRIPPER ONCE. SHE WAS JUST AS HAPPY OUT OF HER CLOTHES AS IN 'EM"

Corey Beaulieu

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Trivium have a few friends over

TRIVIUM have enjoyed a rapid rise to the heady and hedonistic heights of metal success. With a new drummer in their ranks, they're celebrating a renewed sense of fun. Lock up your daughters.

Words: Gill. Pics: Tina Korhonen.

Trivium have only been in London for three days and already there is a trail of destruction, debauchery and violence in their wake. Their tour manager is covered in blood from a head wound, their sound guy is thrown out of the aftershow for being too loud, and their guitarist passes out with seven girls in his bed. All the characters in Trivium – frontman Matt Heafy, bassist Paolo Gregoletto, guitarist Corey Beaulieu and new drummer Nick Augusto – have a great sense of humour and fun, but even this kind of hi-jinx isn't what you'd expect from a band who've seemed so serious in recent years. It seems that the replacement of former drummer Travis Smith with Paolo's old schoolfriend and Trivium drum-tech Nick has injected a new sense of brotherhood, if not purpose, into their cause. From small beginnings, the band have overtaken their elders to headline their Into The Mouth Of Hell We Tour with Chimaira, Whitechapel and Rise To Remain.

It's day two of two sold-out nights at London's Koko and we join the quartet for a late lunch in Camden Market. Matt – whose charming wife is with him – is keen to eat, but they've lost Corey to one of the many stalls. Matt is in fine fettle – and we swear yet another few inches taller – as we discuss the US and UK scenes and how they differ. A scraggy teenager sidles up to Matt and as if in a trance says, "You're Matt Heafy," before repeating, "Oh my God... Oh my God..." a few times. Picture taken, job done.

Dyed-in-the-wool metalhead Corey finally arrives to join the rest of the band and a massive smile.

"Check this out," he beams, before pulling his purchase out of a bag. The t-shirt features a skeleton holding a guitar and doing a knee-slide as hands reach up from graves and lightning fills the sky. Dude, what could make that shirt any more metal? Corey ponders before responding.

"Tits."

En route to the restaurant, we are aggressively accosted by a 'Camden Random' with his camera at the ready. He knows these guys are a band, and while he doesn't know which one, he's damn sure that's not going to stop him missing out on the action. *Hammer* photographer Tina fends off the pseudo-paparazzi, but undeterred he follows us into the restaurant, demanding a photo. The band's publicist stands in the way but he stands on her foot until he is finally removed from the premises.

"We've got kinda used to this," says Matt's wife, who is in town for a few days. "There are always invasions of our privacy. Just before we got married some of my personal pictures were taken from my Facebook page and found their way onto other websites. It was awful."

In conversation, it transpires that Paolo and new drummer Nick have known each other since they were young when they spent time together on Christian camps and in Catholic school. Their contempt for the religion is evident and their ease with each other is that of siblings. The band remains diplomatic as they talk about recently departed drummer Travis Smith and reports that the band 'fired Travis by phone'.

"We were all over the country," explains Matt. "We couldn't all get in one room, so the only way to get all the people who needed to be there to talk was on a conference call. It's not like we just texted him."

But while some fans question, the band themselves are embracing their new lease of life and are excited to be playing with Nick, all of whom say is an amazing drummer.

Matt finishes up his Wasabi ice cream and we all head back to the hotel. Despite reaching the end of the *Shogun* album/tour cycle, there are still a few interviews to do.

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BEHIND METAL'S DIRTY CURTAIN

TRIVIUM LONDON, MARCH 2010

Trivium and Steel Panther: Running the halls

Austin and Matt share a private joke

Black out in the red room

Matt Heafy. Very tall

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Corey contemplates the second most metal shirt ever
Chimaira's Matt DeVries does shots
Who's the daddy? Well... me
Rise To Remain: seeing red

"NO ONE WRITES A METAL BALLAD LIKE SKID ROW, MAN"

Corey Beaulieu

The band sit in the lobby of their rather swanky West End hotel, denim and leather incongruity drawing the worried eyes of incredulous guests.

"No one writes a metal ballad like Skid Row, man," offers Corey as he and Paolo wait for the taxi to the venue. "*Wasted Time* is still fucking awesome to this day. I can't believe I lost my copy of *Slave To The Grind*."

The conversation twists and turns and Paolo explains how the guys are still visiting places they've never played before.

"We played Inverness for the first time on this tour," he says. "We want to do more gigs like that – middle-of-nowhere places."

It's something they've done in the US – playing places in their home state of Florida that they haven't played since the *Ember To Inferno* days. Hard to imagine many of today's work-shy bands begging to play small crowds in obscure towns in their spare time. But Trivium were born to play.

Even in the photoshoot Corey picks and strums as he strikes pose after pose. No wonder they have become one of the best-loved metal bands in the UK, selling out both nights of their two-night run at the 1,500-capacity Koko.

But it's not all work: in between striking poses with the guitar, Corey discusses how ready porn stars are to disrobe, and with such nonchalance.

"Me and Paolo met this one stripper once," he says, understandably excited. "She was just whipping it off right in front of us. We got a picture taken with her while she was doing this..." he says, palms at his chest holding invisible breasts. "She was just as happy out of her clothes as in 'em. Her careers advisor was right on the money!"

Trivium arrive at Koko's back door and narrowly avoid a mobbing. The band may be playing to thousands of kids a night now, but it wasn't always free beer, tour buses and hot food on the rider. They've come a long way since *Hammer* joined them at London's Highbury Garage with 3 Inches Of Blood in 2004, with Arch Enemy in Stockholm in 2005, and saw them in Dublin with God Forbid in 2006. Their subsequent ascent has since seen them play Brixton Academy with Machine Head in 2007 and the Unholy Alliance III tour with Slayer in 2008.

After Paolo's shaved his head and Matt's performed his stringent exercises, the frontman plays some of the new riffs he's working on. Of the five he plays, there is a strong 'Trivium sound' emerging. The follow-up to 2008's *Shogun* is shaping up well, and with Nick in the band they can't wait to start working on it properly.

This is their second show at Koko and the buzz from last night is written on Twitter feeds and Facebook posts across the capital. The mood is effervescent but – never ones to rest on their laurels – the band cram every minute with productivity, and they head downstairs for a meet and greet.

Rise To Remain (fronted by Bruce Dickinson's son, Austin) have just come off stage and are tucking into their rider. Sure there's Stella, but Austin would much prefer a pint of bitter: no one's in the mood to fight tonight. The conversation is punctuated by the arrival of two ludicrously attractive and well-spoken young blondes. Rise To Remain are where Trivium were five years ago: the upstarts tearing up the circuit and impressing their elders. And speaking of elders, Mr Bruce Dickinson himself watched their set proudly from the wings.

Matt Heafy is back in the dressing room and the often-anxious frontman downs a shot with their sound guy, Goody, before readying himself for their set.

Live, the band have never been better. Their enthusiasm, energy and the awesome power of the music is completely overpowering. *The Crusade* may be a less-loved album, but live, *Anthem (We Are The Fire)* will make the hair on your arms stand on end. And yes, *Dying In Your Arms* and *Pull Harder On The Strings Of Your Martyr* still get the biggest response, not least as most of Rise To Remain join them onstage, taking over mic duties, beers in hand. Nick is in his element behind the kit, adding a harder, heavier metal feel to the live set. Trivium walk a line as awesome as it is hard to walk: creating a positive and triumphant metal sound unlike so much bleak and despondent modern metal, without veering into cheese. Few other metal bands can boast playing to this many people so early in their career.

Through 'someone who knows someone', the Trivium party has managed to snag the use of the upstairs of a nearby pub, a crate of beer and a bottle Jack Daniel's. But Austin doesn't care because they have cask ales.

"I like real ale," he says. "Me and my dad go to the brewery in Chiswick where they make London Pride to have a few."

Do you now? And which pub might that be...?

It's as if someone has emptied a copy of *Hammer* into the set of *Cheers*: Chimaira's Matt De Vries is playing pool, Corey is on the prowl and Rise To Remain's manager schools his young band singing along to the punk on the stereo. As Dillinger Escape Plan takes over from punk, everything becomes a blur and suddenly it's tomorrow and there is pain.

Trivium sit, finally assembled, in a curry house in London's Soho district on their day off. The band are all heading – in various states of scepticism – to see Steel Panther at Brixton. And some fiery Indian goodness is needed to flick away the remaining nodes of hangover pain.

The band left the pub at 3am and continued drinking at their hotel. Earlier, their soundman, Goody, had been thrown out of the pub for bellowing at the top of his lungs and refusing to stop. He had blacked out and come-to at 5am, wandering the streets, completely lost. Their tour manager had still yet to work out how he had cut his head open while a camera revealed the evidence of a fully clothed Corey passed out in bed with seven girls.

"It was fucking eight in the morning, dude!" cries Corey in his own defence. Still heroic in our book.

Once ensconced in the VIP bar at the Brixton Academy, the band imbibe once again and watch as Steel Panther pull the 80s kicking and screaming into the new millennium. The buzz that surrounds Trivium is no longer that just of a new band, simply that of a great band. So much of their energy comes via osmosis from their fans and the mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship only grows as the band reconnect with the diehards and convert the sceptics. The band have proven that they can survive media mud-slinging and personal problems; let's just hope their crew can survive the touring!

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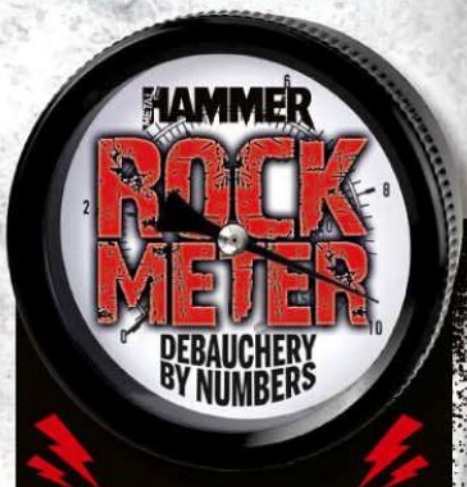

NUMBER OF T-SHIRTS PURCHASED IN CAMDEN MARKET: 3

HOW METAL THEY ARE: 666%

NUMBER OF BEERS CONSUMED AT THE AFTERSHOW: TOO MANY...

NUMBER OF HOURS SLEEP COREY HAD: 4

NUMBER OF WIVES PRESENT: 1

NUMBER OF GIRLS IN COREY'S BED WHEN HE PASSED OUT: 7 (ISH)

NUMBER OF GIRLS COREY WOKE UP TO NEXT MORNING: 0

NUMBER OF TYPES OF CUISINE CONSUMED: AT LEAST 5

NUMBER OF NEW TRIVIUM RIFFS WE HEARD: 5

HOW MANY ARE AMAZING: 5

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"ONE OF **MY BEST FRIENDS IS NOT HERE** AND HE'S FIGHTING DAY-BY-DAY **TO COME BACK TO THE WORLD"**

STEPHEN CARPENTER

Deftones (left to right): Sergio Vega, Abe Cunningham, Chino Moreno, Stephen Carpenter, Frank Delgado

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ME BACK RIGHTER

DEFTONES have twice faced the end of the line, first when frontman Chino Moreno walked out of the band, then when bassist Chi Cheng fell into a coma after an horrific car crash. But they're made of sterner stuff and have returned with the best album of their career.

Words: Terry Bezer. Pictures: John McMurtrie.

There aren't many bands in modern rock who've gone through as much as the Deftones. Through inner-band conflict, substance abuse, the tragedy of losing a member to a car accident and all sorts in-between, they remain one of the biggest bands within our stratum. They've outlasted nu metal, emo, metalcore and screamo (and they've been labelled in just about all of them) without ever altering their core sound. Ol' Blue Eyes says he did it his way, but Deftones are the real deal.

Their seeds were sown in 1988, during seventh grade at a school in Sacramento, California. Abe Cunningham and Chino Moreno were classmates who would sit in lessons and spend their time like most other high school students: by taking apart a pair of headphones and running one ear up each of their sleeves and playing the then-recently released *...And Justice For All* by Metallica over and over again.

"I knew Abe played drums but there was a song on that record that he said he could play all the way through," laughs a reminiscing Chino Moreno. "I was like, 'No you can't!' I went to his house and he played the whole song. I had to take him to meet Stephen (Carpenter)."

Hailing from the same modest suburban neighbourhood of Sacramento as Chino, teenage guitarist Stephen had already taught himself how to shred. By this point, Stephen was already able to rip on the likes of Death Angel and S.O.D., and following Chino introducing the pair, the musical chemistry between Abe and Stephen was instantaneous.

"They were locked in straight away. Stephen's jaw just hit the ground when he heard Abe play," says Chino. "I saw Abe at school a few weeks later and he said he and Stephen had been jamming for a few weeks and they'd written a few songs and Stephen wanted me to sing.

"I didn't know anything about heavy metal really, apart from a couple of Metallica records, so I didn't know how to sing like that," admits Chino. "I didn't know how to sing but in junior high school, I used to rap. I loved The Smiths so I'd try to sing like Morrissey and I'd rap too, so I had no identity at all. All of those things are still in me and that's made the uniqueness of what I do, I guess."

With bass player Chi Cheng completing the Deftones lineup, the young band wrote everything from reggae-rap to straight-up, balls-to-the-wall heavy metal in a crusade to cement their sound. Honing their craft locally in Sacramento, they formed their signature sound and hit LA to get themselves a deal, meeting fellow newcomers Korn in the process. After recording a demo with soon-to-be nu metal über-producer Ross Robinson, Chino says that

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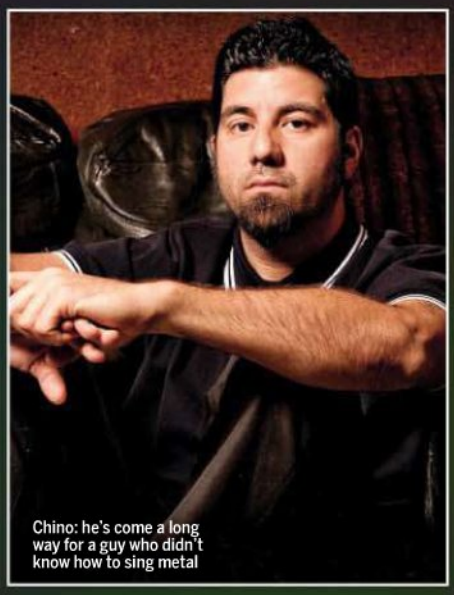
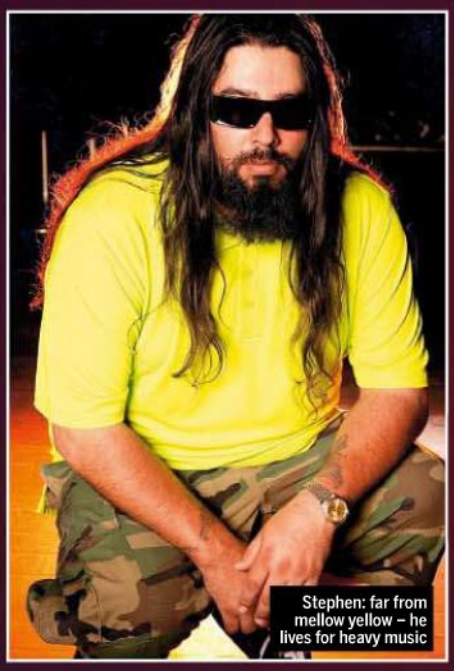
Abe, Chino, Chi and Stephen in, er, happier times


Chino: he's come a long way for a guy who didn't know how to sing metal

"I TOLD THE PRODUCER **SATURDAY NIGHT WRIST** WOULD BE

Chino sticking to what he does best


Stephen: far from mellow yellow – he lives for heavy music

people were already starting to spit jibes at the band and label them 'baby Korn'.

"We were definitely grouped in with Korn," says Stephen. "The only similarity was that we both made heavy music and we were both doing something that people considered exciting at the time, but I liked what those guys were doing."

"We had to take our own road and not attach ourselves to any scene," agrees Chino. "That's something that's always been our thing."

Recruiting Pantera and Prong producer Terry Date and signing with Madonna's Maverick label, the Deftones recorded and released their debut album, *Adrenaline*. Alongside Korn and Incubus, the Deftones were cited as pioneers for the burgeoning nu metal scene and riot-starting tracks like *7 Words* and *Minus Blindfold* sound as fresh and club-ready in 2010 as they did upon their release 15 years ago.

"I'm not sure our mental capacity has ever been forward-thinking," says Stephen, who laughs and reveals that his down-beat turn of phrase has earned him the nickname Negatron amongst his bandmates. "We try to do something that sounds good to us and that's just about it. There's never a masterplan behind what we do."

"I couldn't even say that we put that much thought into that record," says a modest Chino. "We captured an energy and a youthful spirit that you can still hear and that still shows today but we were just excited to be recording an album."

If the band fired early warning shots with their debut release, their sophomore effort, 1998's *Around The Fur*, blew the fucking doors off. Maintaining the zip-and-bounce of their debut on the dancefloor-filling *My Own Summer (Shove It)*, the band also began to extend their journey into the world of atmospherics with Chino's other-worldly vocal delivery growing in stature tenfold, on an album that's rightfully regarded as one of the most essential rock albums of the 90s.

"It's funny, people always think it's me who brought that other side to the band," Chino shrugs. "It was Stephen who wrote *Be Quiet And Drive (Far Away)* and started building on our sound in that way and it just kind of worked for all of us."

"I wrote *Mascara* too and that's pretty mellow, right?" laughs Stephen. "I don't always write the heaviest music. I write what I feel. I just feel the heavier stuff more often than not because that's how I am as a guitar player."

Riding universal acclaim for their bold leap forward on *...Fur*, its follow-up *White Pony* saw the band branching out further than ever before with Chino adding second guitar to the writing process but, due to his amateur ability, also adding an age to the band's recording process.

"It slowed us down incredibly because he didn't really know how to play guitar," says Stephen. "That time when he was learning to play guitar was when we went from taking a year or less to make a record to two years or greater."

"I sucked at guitar," admits Chino. "I was learning to play and I didn't really know what I was doing and I still don't, but Stephen only recently admitted that it made him mad."

"I still joke around with him about how I wish I could have learnt to play guitar in a band that was signed already," Stephen concludes.

Through this sense of frustration, there were allegations within the press that a power struggle was starting to emerge between Chino and Stephen during the album's creation.

"There wasn't a power struggle," says Stephen with point-blank directness.

"People don't realise that me and Stephen wrote a lot of that record together and we were in the same headspace at the same time," asserts Chino. "It wasn't that I took control and mellowed out the band at all. We write well together because we're both looking to push ourselves. It's not that we want to out-do each other but we do try to out-do ourselves."

Through all of the alleged creative control issues and added time to the band's schedule, the Deftones created what is commonly considered their finest hour with *White Pony*. Fearlessly experimental and a true journey of an album, it's a record that is rightfully revered as one of the best rock albums of the last decade and an essential purchase for anyone interested in alternative metal.

"Towards the end of the making of that record, we knew we had something special," admits Chino. "When we were listening to the final mixes, we knew we were doing something that nobody else was doing, that had pushed ourselves and I felt great about it."

White Pony saw Deftones hit new heights, landing at number three on the Billboard charts and taking in headline arena shows in the UK that included A Perfect Circle and Linkin Park serving as support acts at Wembley Arena and the now-defunct London Arena in Docklands respectively, as well as beating Pantera, Iron Maiden and Slipknot to win Best Metal Performance at the 2001 Grammys.

If it seems all fluffy kittens and rags-to-riches up to this point, prepare for a slight change in pace. If this were an episode of VH1's *Behind The Music*, this would be the part where the music becomes sombre and the voiceover guy puts on his best serious voice...

Beginning work on their self-titled album (ironically, originally set to be titled *Lovers*), the band began to hit hard times in their personal lives.

"That's the only album where the music was secondary to our personal problems," says Chino. "We were all going through different things like divorce or drugs. It's hard to really think back to that period because I was out of my mind!"

With Chino beginning to fight a war with drug abuse that was set to consume him for the next few years of his life, the personal problems that were coursing through the band's lifeblood would start to cause a musical breakdown. With

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Frank, Abe, Chino, Stephen and Sergio have weathered the Change (In The House Of Flies)

MY LAST EVER DEFTONES ALBUM"

CHINO MORENO

those reports of creative power struggles within the band rearing their ugly head once more, Stephen admits that he took a stand in the making of that album.

"When we got to the self-titled album, Chino would play the quieter stuff and little jangly things and me, as a guitar player, I made a stand on that record," Stephen states. "I said, 'If it's not heavy, I'm not playing on it.' I stuck to that. I was introduced to Meshuggah and I was consumed by their music and we're a heavy band and I just wanted to play heavy-ass music and Chino wasn't into that. We were as far away from each other musically at that point as at any point in our history."

The band battled through their problems to create the most challenging and musically diverse collection of their career. While it stands as the most successful Deftones album in terms of chart positions in both the UK and the States (numbers seven and two respectively), the self-titled effort didn't garner the widespread acclaim of any of the band's previous outings and remains something of a love-hate album amongst the band's fanbase. This feeling of indifference was to prove the least of the band's worries, with Chino's drug problem beginning to spiral out of control.

"I'd do whatever, mostly coke and speed, and get amped out of my mind," admits Chino. "I'd think I was being productive but I'd never finish anything. I'd drink a lot of Jamesons to bring me back down too. When things were bad, I'd just drown myself in the dirtiest shit I could do. For a whole lot of my career, I lived like I didn't give a shit about the next day.

Chi Cheng: now fighting his way back to health

"That was probably why I was so difficult to deal with for those years, but I wasn't the only one in the band doing something that they shouldn't have been doing."

Sessions on the band's fifth album, *Saturday Night Wrist*, came to a grinding halt. With Chino continuing his stop-start style of working and then going on to complete an album with his ambient side-project, Team Sleep, his bandmates started to lose patience with their vocalist.

"It wasn't a fun time at all," says Chino. "I really lost my friendship with the band during that whole thing and there was something really personal which I will tell you because it never really gets spoken about. I heard they were talking about getting someone else to sing so they could finish the record. When I heard that I laughed, but I thought, 'Could they really just do that to me?' I believed it and I stopped communicating with them and I went and did Team Sleep and I didn't do that out of defiance, I was going to do that anyway, but I left and I didn't talk to any of them for six months.

"I still haven't really confronted them about that whole thing because it's not worth it," says Chino. "But that was the main thing I look at and go, 'Man, you knew me since I was eight years old and you guys would really get somebody else to record these songs because I'm having a hard time in my life right now? If I really am a drug addict then help me!' and I felt like they were pushing me away and they probably felt that I was running away. It was a pretty deep time."

Did you think about quitting the band?

"Yeah," admits Chino. "I thought about it a lot during those times. During the self-titled and also during *Saturday Night Wrist*. When I was finished with my vocals on *...Wrist* I told the producer that it was the last Deftones album that I would ever put vocals on."

"It wasn't just me that considered [replacing Chino], it was all of us and it really didn't have anything to do with him at the time," said Stephen. "We had the music all done and he's just going to bounce now and do Team Sleep before we're finished? What the hell! Nobody wanted to replace him but nobody wanted to sit around and wait for him either.

"When he got back and we were clear that we were ready to move on and we put out *B-Sides & Rarities*, it lit a fire under Chino," says Stephen. "The overall sound of *...Wrist* needed to go through that whole process to get to what you hear today. As wild a journey as that was, we were coming together as individuals by the end of that process and it was good for us and the vibes within the band have been good ever since."

Saturday Night Wrist was released to moderate acclaim from fans and the press but, more importantly, the Deftones began to enjoy each other's company for the first time in too long. Chino is currently two years sober of drugs, and the band's shows on the *Saturday Night*

BACK TO SCHOOL

A DEFTONES HISTORY LESSON

1988
Abe Cunningham and Stephen Carpenter are introduced to each other by Chino Moreno. The three begin jamming before Chi Cheng joins and completes the Deftones lineup.

Youthful 'tones

1994
The band branch out of Sacramento and begin playing shows in LA. They play shows with Korn, court the attention of nu metal producer extraordinaire Ross Robinson before finally signing with Madonna's Maverick Records imprint.

1995
Deftones record and release *Adrenaline*. It goes on to sell over a million copies in the US alone.

1997
Deftones release *Around The Fur* to universal critical acclaim. The album sees the band's worldwide popularity soar with stints on Warped Tour and Ozzfest in the States as well as sets at Roskilde and Pinkpop and a main stage appearance at the Reading Festival in 1998.

On the road to fame

1999
After credits on *Around The Fur*, Frank Delgado (DJ Speedboat) is officially appointed a full-time member of the band.

2000
White Pony is released.

2001
Deftones release the *Back To School* EP and beat Pantera, Iron Maiden and Slipknot to win the Grammy for Best Metal Performance for the song *Elite* from *White Pony*.

2003
Band rack up studio costs of around $2.5million as they stall on the release of their self-titled album. It is eventually released in May to mixed reviews.

2005
Band rifts are reported as Chino Moreno releases the self-titled album from his Team Sleep project. Further problems arise when he tours with the band.

2006
Chino returns to the Deftones as they release *Saturday Night Wrist*.

2008
During the sessions for *Eros*, Chi Cheng is involved in a car accident on November 4 that leaves him in a coma.

2009
Eros is shelved until a later date as the band play shows with former Quicksand bassist Sergio Vega. They confirm Sergio will play in the band in Chi's absence.

2010
Deftones release *Diamond Eyes*.

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They've been through hell and lived to tell the tale

"I WOULD DO WHATEVER, **MOSTLY COKE AND SPEED,** AND GET ALL AMPED OUT OF MY MIND. **THEN I'D DRINK A LOT OF JAMESONS TO BRING ME BACK DOWN"**

CHINO MORENO

Wrist tour were better than they had been since their arena-selling heyday. They were seemingly invincible.

Then tragedy struck. It was as the band were finishing up work on the album known as *Eros* that they took the biggest hit of their career.

"I was on the tee-box on the third hole at Mile Square golf course," sighs Stephen. "Needless to say the rest of my round was a total blow-out."

On November 4, 2008, Deftones bassist Chi Cheng was involved in a car accident in Santa Clara, CA that left him in a coma. Chi has come through a potentially fatal septicaemia infection and is currently in a minimally conscious state.

"It was one of the hardest things we've had to deal with in our lives," says Chino, the anguish evident in his every word.

Chino pumps a Cleveland crowd full of *Adrenaline*

"We never had that conversation about the band continuing. We just wanted to play music together to help escape what was going on; we just wanted to get in the room and play and we invited Sergio (Vega, former bassist with influential post-hardcore outfit, Quicksand) to play with us and it felt good. We couldn't have just sat and wallowed in it, it was too much. We miss Chi dearly and I look at [new album] *Diamond Eyes* as being really therapeutic for us as a band."

"Chino calls it therapy through music, but for me it's just that you can't sit around forever, you have to go on and live. It's just not easy," says Stephen.

"That same energy that carried us through ...*Wrist* when Chino was away and not thinking about the rest of us that dragged us through, is the same energy that's dragged us through *Diamond Eyes*," Stephen continues. "The only difference is that when we went through the same struggles with Chino, it was of a selfish nature, and this whole thing with Chi has just been tragic. It's not that I'm uneasy talking about it, it's just that I don't know what to say. One of my best friends who I spent my whole adult life with is not here with us because of one moment and he's fighting day-by-day to come back to the world and be himself and that's just difficult and there's nothing perfect to be said."

But through all of the heartbreak comes *Diamond Eyes*. A defiant and uplifting listening experience, it stands up as one of the greatest albums of the band's career and hind-sight could well prove it to be a milestone in modern metal.

"We made this album in the wake of Chi's accident and created something positive in amongst that huge negative," says Stephen. "What I hear when I hear this record is positivity; it was a fun and enjoyable experience making it."

"This is the first record in a while where I can't wait to get out and play these songs for people," agrees Chino. "We'll always play the old stuff that people want to hear but there's lots of this record that feels just as necessary for us to play because we're so proud of this record."

Celebrating the 15 years since the release of their debut album, perhaps the biggest testament to the Deftones' career to date is that they've never allowed themselves to become a nostalgia act. They are still creating some of the best work of their lives in 2010. Constantly moving forward, the Deftones have never allowed themselves to become cartoon characters for the media like so many of their peers, nor have they ever descended into self-parody. Quite simply, Deftones have been one of metal's most gloriously creative shining lights for the better part of two decades and they continue to create career-affirming music to this day.

"There's never been a point where we've found a formula and stuck to it or wanted to fit in with what's cool," says Chino. "We've changed as we've changed as people and as musicians and we've grown that way and that people have liked what we do is great. We'll keep evolving, I can promise that."

***DIAMOND EYES* IS OUT NOW VIA WARNER BROS**

DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH A LOOK AT DEFTONES' BACK CATALOGUE

ADRENALINE
MAVERICK, 1995

Fifteen years on from its initial release, the tracks that make up this immense debut still sound cutting edge today. More melodic than Korn and heavier than Rage Against The Machine, Deftones created their own sound right off the bat.

BEST TRACK: ***NOSEBLEED***

AROUND THE FUR
MAVERICK, 1998

Deftones stepped up their creativity on this bona fide 90s classic. Unconventional riffing combined with Chino's rapidly-expanding scat-and-croon vocals to create a unique and universally acclaimed album.

BEST TRACK: ***MY OWN SUMMER (SHOVE IT)***

WHITE PONY
MAVERICK, 2000

The Deftones' magnum opus. Diverse, euphoric and able to take you on a sprawling, euphoric journey whilst staying metal in its own unique way. Spreading their wings beyond nu metal for good, *White Pony* remains a classic.

BEST TRACK: ***FEITICEIRA***

DEFTONES
MAVERICK, 2003

Their most eclectic collection, the band were struggling with immense troubles and simultaneously assembled their most ambient and savage material to date, all under one roof. Great tracks, yet bizarrely incohesive.

BEST TRACK: ***WHEN GIRLS TELEPHONE BOYS***

SATURDAY NIGHT WRIST
MAVERICK, 2006

With the communication amongst the bandmembers at an all-time low, Deftones assembled a collection of songs that offered little new to their arsenal but still threw up a handful of astounding tracks.

BEST TRACK: ***BEWARE***

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DEFTONES
DIAMOND EYES

"A MASTERPIECE." – ROCKSOUND

"WHEN DEFTONES SAY THIS IS ONE OF THE BEST ALBUMS OF THEIR CAREER, THEY WEREN'T KIDDING. STUNNING STUFF." – METAL HAMMER

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five albums with the twang of yore.

GRAND MAGUS
Iron Will, 2008

Somewhere between the riffs of doom and the triumphant battle cry of Manowar, Grand Magus are arguably the finest all-out metal band of their generation. *Like The Oar Strikes The Water* will make you bang your head off.

HIGH ON FIRE
Blessed Black Wings, 2005

A thunderous, city-levelling power trio that can mix it up with any other metal band on the planet and emerge victorious, High On Fire are the old heavy injected with a new kind of intensity. This album has riffs that will crush you like an insect.

BLACK LABEL SOCIETY
The Blessed Hellride, 2003

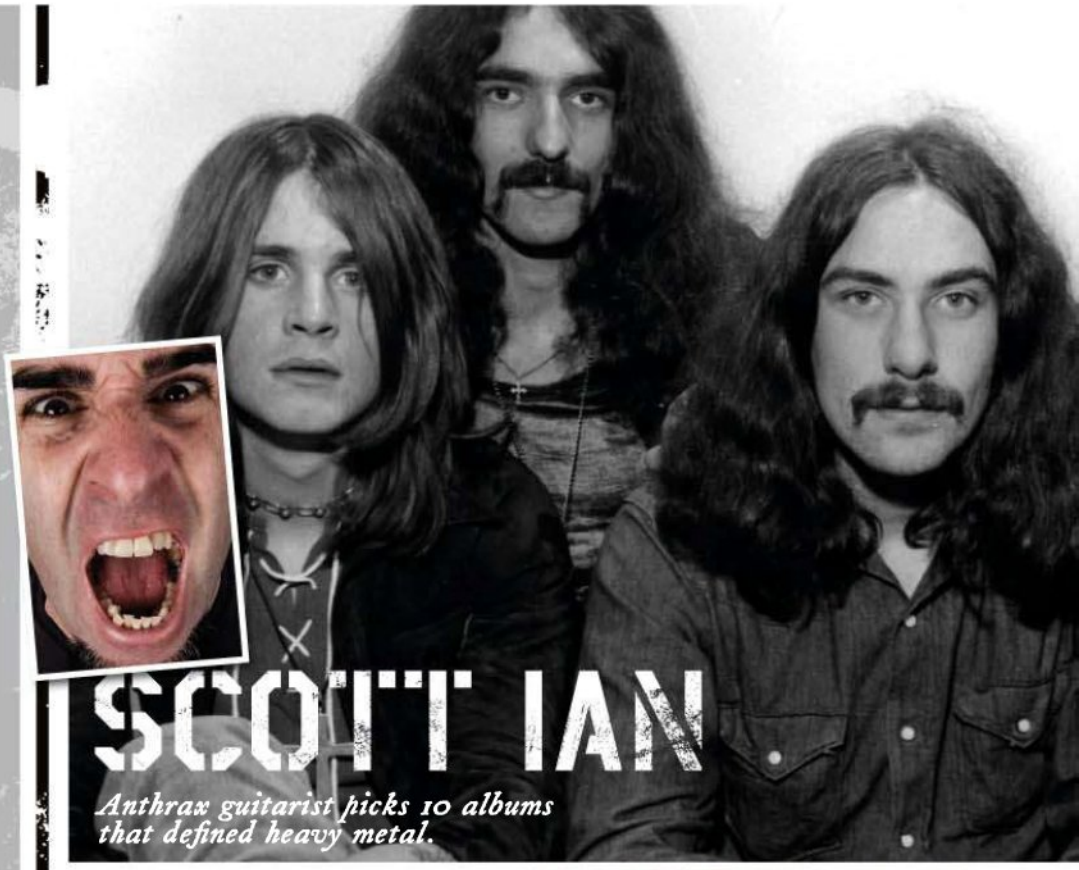
Metal's premier master of the shred, Zakk Wylde has been flying the flag for red-blooded metal for more than two decades. His band *always* kicks arse, but on this album they kicked even more than usual. And Ozzy's on it. Job done.

WOLF
Evil Star, 2004

Sweden produce more great metal bands than most, and Wolf are one of the very finest. Invoking the fiery spirit of early Iron Maiden, Judas Priest and Mercyful Fate, they're the ruling champions of trad metal's new wave and this is sheer stainless steel perfection.

PORTRAIT
Portrait, 2008

Rising up from the Swedish underground, clad in leather and breathing fire, Portrait are the dark, destructive flipside to Wolf's bright bombast. On their debut, they sounded like Maiden fronted by King Diamond, beamed directly into your ears from the bowels of Hell.



SCOTT IAN

Anthrax guitarist picks 10 albums that defined heavy metal.

BLACK SABBATH MASTER OF REALITY

"I can't choose just 10 albums... Damn, that's hard. OK, first off I'll have to put the first five **BLACK SABBATH** albums as my first choice. Can I compress them all into one album? I can't leave any of them out. Sabbath came before everybody else, and they laid down the template for every metal band that followed. The lyrics, the songs, the album covers – basically everything on those records is the Bible when it comes to metal. Anyone who disagrees with that is wrong, ha ha! After that I'm gonna say **JUDAS PRIEST** and *British Steel* [1980], and the reason why Priest are so important is because some of Sabbath's early riffs still had a little bit of blues in them, even though they were the inventors of metal. Priest took away that tiny bit of blues and made pure metal music: it was a bit like melting down some impure gold, draining off the impurities and coming up with something totally pure. Then we come to **IRON MAIDEN**, and I'm gonna have to have two albums here – *Killers* [1981] and *The Number Of The Beast* [1982]. They really found their sound with *Killers*: it was so much better than the first, self-titled album and they'd taken the Sabbath, Priest and Lizzy stuff that they were into and made it into the Iron Maiden sound. As for *Number Of The Beast*, it's not just my favourite Maiden album, it's possibly the best metal record of all time! There's something about that record that makes it special, from top to bottom and from start to finish... So now let's go to **MOTÖRHEAD**. Now, Lemmy will be the first to tell you that Motörhead aren't a heavy metal band. Like he says on stage every night, 'We are Motörhead and we play rock'n'roll', right? When you hear that coming from the man himself, it's kinda hard to argue with him, but I will! The bands that were the biggest influence on Anthrax when we first started were definitely Motörhead and Iron Maiden. I have to put the *Ace Of Spades* [1980] album in here, because it was 100 per cent to do with what we became. It completely kicked my ass. It made me hear music in a completely different way: their songwriting and their riffing had so much metal in them, even though there was other stuff in there. They really gave metal a boost, and we gravitated to that as a band. Motörhead were one of the reasons that speed metal even happened

GENRE DEFINING

Five essential NWOBHM albums.

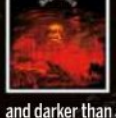
Iron Maiden
THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST, 1982

After two albums that gave metal a huge wake-up call, Maiden recruited Bruce Dickinson, wrote some magnificent songs and, deservedly, became fucking huge.

Saxon
WHEELS OF STEEL, 1980

With their knack for timeless anthems kicking into top gear, Saxon could hardly fail with their second album. From *Motorcycle Man* to *Machine Gun*, this was British metal at its stripped down, belligerent best.

Angel Witch
ANGEL WITCH, 1980



Despite being overshadowed by many of their peers, Angel Witch were heavier, sharper and darker than anyone else in the NWOBHM. Their debut album remains a deservedly revered classic of the era.

Diamond Head
LIGHTNING TO THE NATIONS, 1980

Best known for being a favourite of James and Lars, DH were inspirational and groundbreakers. Metallica have covered most of the songs on this album. Easy to see why.

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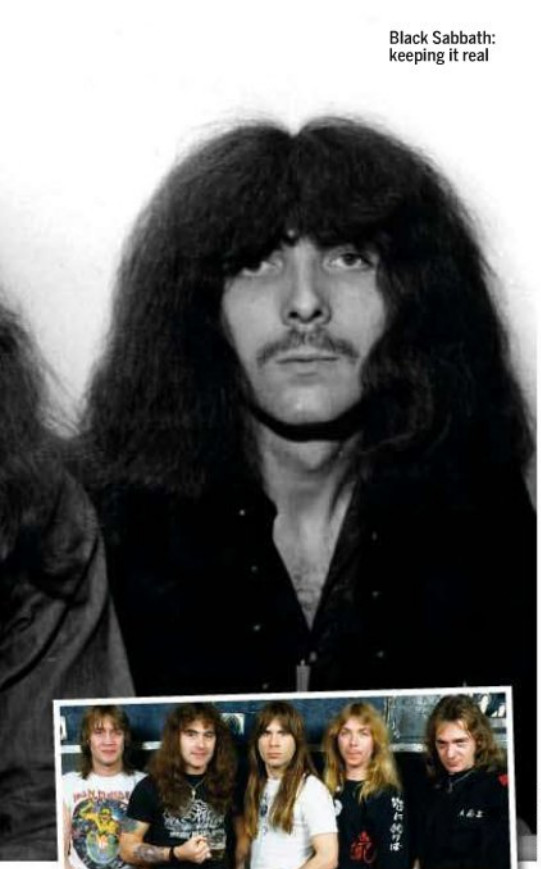

Black Sabbath: keeping it real

Iron Maiden: powerslaves to fashion

in the first place. Next... what's next? I'll say **SAXON**, but which album? It has to be *Wheels Of Steel* [1980] I guess, but it's a tough one. God, we loved their records back then. That band never got the credit that they deserved. And of course I absolutely have to say **AC/DC**, even though I never really thought they were a heavy metal band. I'm gonna say *Let There Be Rock* [1977]. I heard them even before Judas Priest, and that album changed my life. I remember putting headphones on and listening to it in my bedroom when I was a kid, and I'd never heard anything like it. I'd never heard guitars like that! The band sounded like they were in the room playing with you. Nobody could do it better than they could, even to this day. A few years later I heard the first black metal bands, and **MERCYFUL FATE** just blew me away. Their album *Nuns Have No Fun* [aka self-titled debut EP, 1982] had a completely different sound and approach. It was raw, it was evil and it sounded so crazy, with King Diamond's vocals and those weird lyrics he wrote. My next choice, and I know it's going to be a bit weird for some people because I've been talking about all these bands from the 70s and early 80s, is **FAITH NO MORE**. They were one of my favourite bands of all time and still are to this day. I love all their albums – *Angel Dust* [1992] through to *Album Of The Year* [1997] – but I'm gonna have to nominate The *Real Thing* [1989] because it was the album where I first got into them, and also because the first track, *From Out Of Nowhere*, is one of my favourite FNM songs of all time. They really changed metal. Mike Patton is one of my favourite singers. Oh, wait, did I forget **THIN LIZZY**? It's gotta be *Jailbreak* [1976], because a world without that album would be a sad world indeed!"

AC/DC: original Aus'n'roll!

DAVID THORPE/REX

LIVE SHIT

The 10 Hammer-approved best metal live albums.

KISS

Alive!, 1975

The album that broke Kiss in America. It was always said that if the band could bottle their live energy and deliver it on record, there'd be no stopping them. Guess what? They did just that. The album's success started a trend for double live albums.

THIN LIZZY

Live & Dangerous, 1978

Lizzy were a tremendous power live. This album still sends shivers down the spine. There's something effortless about it, and some of Phil Lynott's raps are iconic. "Is there anybody here with a little Irish in them? Any of the girls like a little more?"

AC/DC

If You Want Blood... You Got It, 1978

Just listen to the version of *Whole Lotta Rosie* here. It utterly pisses on the studio recording. And the same goes for everything else on this album. If anyone asks you what was so special about Bon Scott, just play them the record. Game over.

JUDAS PRIEST

Unleashed In The East, 1979

Despite all the controversies over whether this has huge numbers of studio overdubs (something the band deny), this is Judas Priest at their finest. A supreme selection of songs, delivered with power and panache by true greats. Recorded in Japan, by the way. Hence the title.

MOTÖRHEAD

No Sleep 'Til Hammersmith, 1981

Motörhead did with this album what they'd never done, and would never do again: topped the UK charts. This was the affirmation of their total domination of the scene at the time. They were in brilliant form on this tour, and here's the proof blasting at a million billion decibels.

IRON MAIDEN

Live After Death, 1985

This is where the legend of "Scream for me, Long Beach!" was first coined. Recorded on the World Slavery tour in 1984/1985, it captures the excitement and atmosphere of Maiden, when they were selling out arenas in the US, but still remaining almost a cult band.

SLAYER

Decade Of Aggression, 1991

While many top thrash names struggled to capture their energy and brutality on record, this was never a problem for Slayer. Apart from the sheer high-speed ferocity of the performance, what's also obvious is the incredible musicianship of the band, and the clear sound.

METALLICA

Live Shit: Binge & Purge, 1993

A box set of three CDs and two DVDs – or videos, more commonly upon its release – recorded and filmed on the Nowhere Else To Roam tour. This has pretty much everything you'd ever want from a Metallica live set – both band and fans.

PANTERA

Official Live: 101 Proof, 1997

Crashing through every known barrier, Pantera at their best were an unstoppable force. This is the band in top form. You can hear the snarl, the edge, the dynamic, the thrust. It's got real metal magic oozing out of every cocksure riff and each Anselmo roar.

SEPULTURA

Under A Pale Grey Sky, 2002

Recorded at Brixton Academy in December 1996, and historic because straight afterwards Max Cavalera quit – literally backstage. There was an edge that night between the four members, and it helped them to kick up a breathtaking performance, captured here.

Raven

ROCK UNTIL YOU DROP, 1981

Fast, furious and ever so slightly demented, Raven cranked up Brit metal's aggression, floored the accelerator and delivered a debut that still sets pulses racing today.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

The best of Viking and folk metal.

SKYCLAD

The Wayward Sons Of Mother Earth, 1991

Folk metal would probably not exist at all were it not for Martin Walkyier's legendary post-Sabbat project. Blending furious metal with traditional folk could have been disastrous. Instead it was an exuberant triumph.

AMON AMARTH

Once Sent From The Golden Hall, 1998

Thanks to an obsession with their warrior heritage, Amon Amarth have long been the last word in Viking metal. This debut nailed their brutally melodic colours to the longboat mast, and their globe-conquering journey since has been relentless.

FINNTROLL

Jaktens Tid, 2001

There's something wild and booze-inspired going on in the forest. Bringing weird instruments, pointy ears and demented *humppa* vibes to extreme metal, Finntroll make music to drink, dance and fight to, as strange dark magic explodes around them.

MOONSORROW

Kivenkantaja, 2003

Pagan metal with a powerfully progressive edge, Moonsorrow's sonic realm is both epic and adventurous. Summoning the spiritual fortitude of their forefathers, their albums are fascinating, bulging with emotive power, as ancient melodies collide with atmosphere and aggression by the ton.

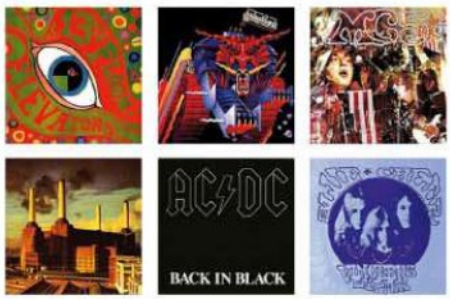
TURISAS

The Varangian Way, 2007

An epic tale of the Vikings' journey from their homeland to the edge of Asia, the second Turisas album secured their reputation as storytellers supreme, while whipping up a storm of flagon-pounding folk metal bluster. Who said the Vikings were ancient history?

DEZ FAFARA

The Devildriver frontman explains what metal means to him.



"**BLACK SABBATH**'s *Black Sabbath* [1970] defines classic heavy metal for me. There are 20-year-olds in bands who are still trying to copy its sound. It's held up so well, and has such an incredible feel to it from start to finish. I love the song *Black Sabbath*, of course, but I also love *N.I.B.* and *The Wizard*. The album is perfect in its entirety – and you can't say that about many albums. The **MC5**'s punk attitude back in the day got them on the cover of *Rolling Stone* before they even released *Kick Out The Jams* [1969]. There's something to be said about that. With their stage show and everything, they were so volatile at the time. They were straddling punk and metal and bringing that anarchist attitude to metal. I wear their t-shirt on stage all the time.

"*First Daze Here: The Vintage Collection* [2001] is such an incredible compilation of **PENTAGRAM**'s early stuff from the 70s that I can't even tell you how many ways there are that it's awesome! People have been starting to pick up on them a bit more over the last five to 10 years. I've been playing them at my house, and people say, 'Who's this?' all the time. I love **13TH FLOOR ELEVATORS'** *The Psychedelic Sounds Of The 13th Floor Elevators* [1966]. You might not regard it as metal but it's heavy as hell, and this band totally defined the genre of their time. I play it a lot on the bus and I've been turning people on to Roky Erickson on tour – they're like, 'Who is this guy?' and then they check out his lyrics. He was a psychedelic visionary.

"It's not metal, true, but a lot of metal bands cover **PINK FLOYD**, and I think that Floyd have influenced everybody. Talk to Machine Head, for example – they love Floyd. This album is heavy in so many ways – not just in the guitars. No one else was doing what these guys were doing 30 years ago, and the music still stands tall today. Check out *Animals* [1977].

"From start to finish, **JUDAS PRIEST**'s *Defenders Of The Faith* [1984] is unreal. I love the sound of classic metal albums like this one. *Defenders Of The Faith* is raw. Compare it to a lot of stuff nowadays and you realise how overproduced everything is, with the advent of Pro-Tools

GENRE DEFINING

Hammer-approved symphonic metal.

Nightwish
ONCE, 2004

Trouble may have been brewing behind the scenes, but the final Nightwish album fronted by the bewitching Tarja Turunen is a colossal achievement. As lush as it is bombastic.

Within Temptation
THE SILENT FORCE, 2004

Three albums in, the Dutch outfit really hit their stride, and the results were spectacular. An instant Number One in their home country, this remains their finest hour.

Epica
DESIGN YOUR UNIVERSE, 2004

Many wondered how the vastness of *The Divine Conspiracy* could be followed but Epica did it in style with a grand summation of their career to date on this fourth full-length.

Iced Earth
SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES, 1998

Five albums into their dogged ascent, Iced Earth delivered these life-affirming anthems hewn from purest steel. American metal's best-kept secret was a secret no more.

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Kiss: "They changed my world"

FIN COSTELLO REDFERNS GETTY

and fuckin' vocal tuning and all that other shit. They didn't spend half an hour finetuning it so it sounded right to the computer, ha ha ha!

"I would be totally remiss if I didn't put **AC/DC**'s *Back In Black* [1980] in here. It's the most perfect record ever made – ever! Kids love this stuff too; the music will never die. I got a 12-year-old metalhead at home who wears Slayer shirts. A perfect example of what classic metal means to the kids nowadays is that he woke up listening to Black Sabbath yesterday. I'm hearing *War Pigs* coming from upstairs and I'm thinking, 'Wow!' I said to him, 'How did you get into that?' and he said, 'All my friends listen to Sabbath, dad...'"

"**DEEP PURPLE**'s *Machine Head* [1971] is another unreal record. It's always the bands with the sound that takes it a little bit to the edge who survive for decades, especially when they push the boundaries so far that years later people realise that it was them who started the whole scene off in the first place. **KISS**'s *Alive* [1975] changed my world, man. As far as heavy metal, back then this was some of the heaviest metal around. To me, classic metal has gotta be 60s and 70s. The sound has got to be original, and a lot of the music was original back then. Not that there's no original music out now, but we're all copying somebody's style somewhere – all of us. It's all been done by now.

"Finally I'd recommend **BLUE CHEER**'s *Vincebus Eruptum* [1968]. I can't even pronounce the fuckin' title [*it's 'win-kay-bus' – Academic Ed*] but man, if you dive into this album you'll find yourself amazed at the garage-rock, punk-rock fuckin' scene that was going on in the 60s. It was heavier than anything that's going on now! That record is fuckin' godly. I've heard people calling it the first ever heavy metal record. I have it on constant rotation at the house."

Leaves' Eyes
NJORD, 2009

Fronted by chanteuse Liv Kristine (Theatre Of Tragedy), Leaves' Eyes set the bar scarily high with 2005's *Vinland Saga*. Perhaps propelled by its success, their third album was a truly masterful work.

BRIT PACK

One Minute Silence: live killers

Gone but not forgotten, the British bands who made a difference.

RAGING SPEEDHORN
Raging Speedhorn, 2000

The dirtiest riffs, the craziest vocals and the constant threat of chaos and violence made the mighty Speedhorn the toast of the UK gig circuit after this vicious debut exploded onto our home-grown scene. Sludgecore brilliance from the mean streets of Corby. Where else?

JOHNNY TRUANT
No Tears For The Creatures, 2008

A scathing, artful response to the post-Dillinger era, Johnny Truant made metal records with both heart and brain engaged. This was their final assault; a bleak but thrilling eruption of riffs and roars that marked the Brighton band out as criminally underrated masters of noise.

ACRIMONY
Tumuli Shroomaroom, 1997

A band so dedicated to getting mashed that it's a miracle they ever turned up to the studio at all, South Wales' stoner doom titans could have ruled the world with albums as insanely heavy and psychedelic as this gargantuan hymn to the riff.

EDEN MAINE
The Treachery Pact, 2002

Showcasing their genre-mincing sound – a coruscating blend of thudding, left-field hardcore and brain-melting soundscapes – Eden Maine made their first EP count, but sadly, heavy music wasn't quite ready for them. Still ahead of its time, even now.

DUB WAR
Pain, 1995

Before Skindred, Benji Webbe tore up the rulebook in Dub War, as metal, punk, ragga and dub collided, showering sparks of pure genius in every direction. Songs like *Mental* and *Strike It* made heads bang while setting the dancefloor ablaze. Why didn't nu metal sound like this?

PITCHSHIFTER
www.pitchshifter.com, 1998

Electronic punk fronted by JS Clayden, a sneering, anti-establishment vocalist cut from the same cloth as Lydon and Biafra, and one of the finest British frontmen of the past 15 years. www.pitchshifter.com was a masterclass in industrial dance and fuzzed-up street grit. One of the 90s' most under-appreciated albums.

SIKTH
The Trees Are Dead & Dried Out, 2003

It's nigh on impossible to think of a band who were as far ahead of their time as British noise terrorists Sikth. Brain-melting technicality and vocals that flitted between schizophrenic ranting and stunning hooks, Sikth are still desperately missed to this day.

ONE MINUTE SILENCE
Buy Now... Saved Later, 2000

One of the best live bands on the planet in their heyday, OMS finally captured all of the turbo-charged mosh-provocation of their live shows on this stonewall classic full of floor-filling, rampaging jams.

EARTHTONE9
arc'tan'gent, 2000

Combining a euphoric sense of melody and courageous dynamics with bone-crunching riffs, earthtone9's *arc'tan'gent* should have seen them become a worldwide force. If you've never heard this gem of an album before, iTunes is calling louder than an elephant's guff.

PULKAS
Greed, 1998

Heavily based on bowel-loosening low-end guitars, Pulkas added British steel to a sound that mirrored *State of World Address*-era Biohazard and Killing Joke in equal measure. *Greed* remains an unbelievable slab of alt. metal perfection. That it was Pulkas's sole album is criminal in the extreme.

GROOP DOGDRILL
Half Nelson, 1998

Fuelled on cheap whisky and cigarettes, Groop Dogdrill's *Half Nelson* had the stomp of Angus Young, the rock'n'roll flair of Lemmy and the full-on swagger of the Supersuckers. You want straight-up rock'n'roll? This is for you. Pete Spiby now fronts Black Spiders.

STAMPIN' GROUND
Carved From Empty Words, 2000

Along with Knuckledust, Stampin' Ground were a pioneering force in combining Brit grit, groove metal and hardcore into one viciously confrontational package. Revered as pioneers by all corners of the UKHC scene, Stampin' Ground continue to rightfully gain plaudits four years on from their split.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Zakk Wylde picks five essential classic rockers.

DEEP PURPLE

Made In Japan, 1972

"I actually got into Deep Purple after I got into Black Sabbath, because I was all snobby about the keyboards Purple used. I was like, 'Sabbath don't have any fuckin' keyboards!' But listen to this album: Ian Gillan's vocals shatter people's brains in *Child In Time*. He still does it today."

BAD COMPANY

Bad Company, 1974

"When you're a kid you don't know shit about music: I was 12 years old and thought that Simon & Garfunkel was all there was. Then I heard this and realised what cool shit it was. I found out about Paul Rodgers through Bad Company, not Free."

OZZY OSBOURNE

Diary Of A Madman, 1981

"I gotta have Randy Rhoads. There are faster guitarists than Randy now, but it ain't all about speed. Anybody can get fast with practice. It was his songwriting that counted, and the way his solos were a composition within a composition."

VAN HALEN

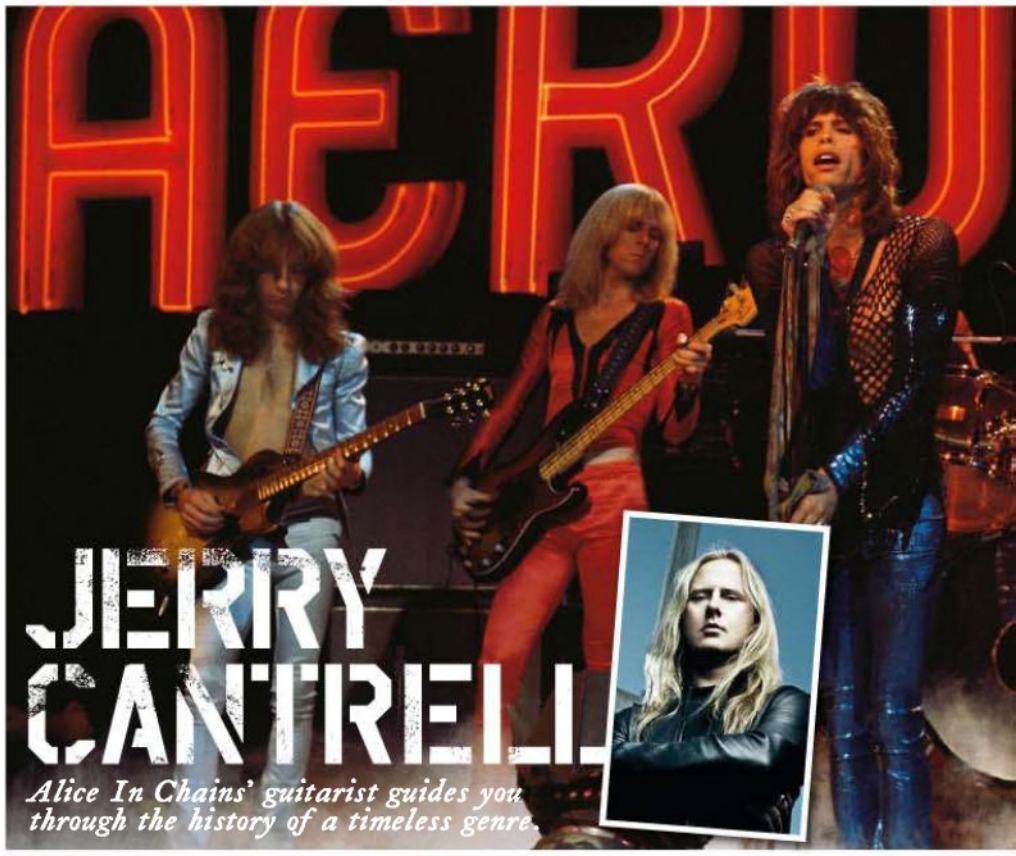
Fair Warning, 1981

"Every album Eddie Van Halen did, he reinvented the guitar. No one – not the best guitar players in the world – has ever written anything like *Spanish Fly*. I saw VH when they were rehearsing with Dave Lee Roth and it sounded fuckin' amazing."

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND

A Decade Of Hits 1969-1979, 1991

"When it comes to the Allman Brothers, just get a greatest hits album. You need everything: the hits, the jams... you can get those things on the famous live album they did, *At Fillmore East* [1971], but their studio stuff was incredible too."



JERRY CANTRELL

Alice In Chains' guitarist guides you through the history of a timeless genre.

"It's tough doing a Top 10 because there are so many records that were important to me. Some have fallen through the cracks but there's a handful that remain in that zone and I guess that's why, because they meant the most. Beginning with **AC/DC**, who are my favourite rock band of all time. I loved a lot of their early records but the one that I really love is *Back In Black* [1980]. For a band to lose a member like that [singer Bon Scott] and continue on and come up with an album like *Back In Black*, and for it to have the impact that it did, it's amazing. That was really important to me then and it's even more important to me now. I've always been drawn to bands that have that uniqueness, and another favourite of mine like that is **BLACK SABBATH**. They made some great records in the 70s but I'd have to put *Paranoid* [1970] up there at the top. The collection of songs on that, the vibe and uniqueness, made it completely different from anything else, and amazingly dark. It also coincided with the beginnings of the idea of wanting to do something like that myself. You'll notice a lot of the bands I'm choosing are not from the United States. But one of the American bands I always loved was **VAN HALEN** and for that I also include their first album, *Van Halen* [1978]. I bought it as a kid through the Columbia Records and Tapes Club, which allowed you to buy seven or eight records for, like, a penny then have to order other records later for a ton of money, ha ha ha! My dad let me do that and I'd sit there listening to it top to bottom, multiple times, on my headphones, while my dad was watching TV. The sound and energy of it was really electrifying. Eddie Van Halen kinda of did what **JIMI HENDRIX** had done to previous generations and reinvented guitar. Speaking of which, I've gotta have the Hendrix album, *Are You Experienced* [1967] in there too. Jimi really revolutionised guitar playing and had a real impact and the cool thing for me was he was from Seattle. So I had a huge connection with that, being a hometown hero, walking the same streets he did, so to speak. He was really close to home and that meant to me it was possible. That record in particular is amazing. For a change of pace I would go for **ELTON JOHN** and *Goodbye Yellow Brick Road* [1973]. Like all the other artists here, I could name five or six records he's done but this is probably the

GENRE DEFINING

Zakk's five fave genre pioneers.

Jimi Hendrix

ARE YOU EXPERIENCED, 1967

"Ozzy once went to see Hendrix, and he was playing guitar with his teeth. Ozzy said, 'What the fuck?' Ha ha! He was an amazing blues player, though it was psychedelic as shit."

Led Zeppelin

I, 1969

"This has a ton of jamming on it. I listened to it at parties and endlessly practised guitar to the songs. I know that people nominate *Led Zeppelin IV* because it was their *Sgt Pepper*, but I love the first one too."

Lynyrd Skynyrd

(PRONOUNCED 'LEH-NERD SKIN-NERD'), 1973

"This is pure rock'n' roll improv, with loads of jamming. Skynyrd had killer songs, and at the end of the day that's what it's all about."

Black Sabbath

SABOTAGE, 1975

"Ozzy sings his fuckin' balls off on this! When it comes to Sabbath I love both Ozzy and Dio, though what most people forget is that the music was totally different when Ronnie joined, not just the vocals."

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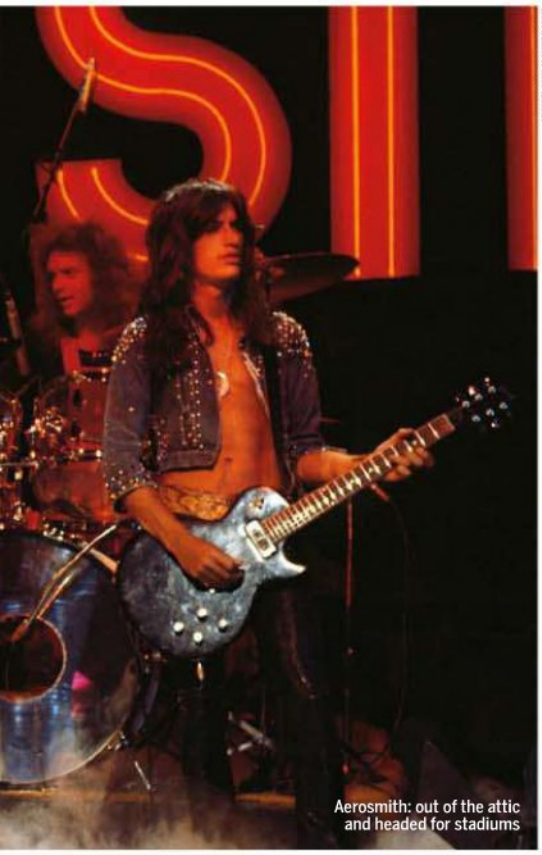
MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVE/CORBIS

Aerosmith: out of the attic and headed for stadiums

ultimate, the one that was really important to me. The way that Elton and Bernie [Taupin, lyricist] wrote together as a team... just amazing songwriters. People don't always remember Elton as a great rock artist now but he was gigantic! From the same era, I'd also choose **PINK FLOYD**. It's a toss-up again, but if I had to name one I'd go for *The Wall* [1979]. I really related to the lyrical aspect of that record, the darkness and the desperation and the loss, just the story of a life. And of course you had the movie to go with it, which I'd scrape some money to go see at a midnight movie. It's difficult enough to make music that stands apart but then there's a whole other level which I think Floyd definitely exists in, music that takes you on a journey. **LED ZEPPELIN** was another band like that. You could pick so many of their albums but I'll go for their [untitled] fourth [aka *Led Zeppelin IV*, 1971]. In the Northwest where I grew up they were always on the radio and still are! The fourth was amazing, it had it all. I remember it for cruising around in your buddy's beat-up car, going to keggers [beer parties] and trying to get yourself a little stink-finger. Ha ha! Another like that was **KISS** and *Destroyer* [1976]. The whole thing when I was a kid was great. Comic book heroes playing rock'n'roll – come on! You know what I mean? Plus there are some really good songs on there. **AEROSMITH**, too, and their album *Toys In The Attic* [1975] was a big part of my musical upbringing. If I could have only one Aerosmith album, that's it. Lastly, **FLEETWOOD MAC** and *Rumours* [1977]; that was a landmark album in my life. The feeling and the emotion you get off it, it's 10-feet thick. Along with the musicianship, it's perfect. I love that record."

MARC SHARRATT/REX FEATURES

AC/DC
BACK IN BLACK, 1980

"This was my first 'DC album. Then I went back and got all the Bon Scott albums. Malcolm Young is one of the great unsung guitar heroes."

HARD ROCK HEAVEN

Hammer salutes the modern classic rockers.

SPIRITUAL BEGGARS
Ad Astra, 2000

Founded by Arch Enemy's Mike Amott, Spiritual Beggars are an old-school blues metal colossus and this is simply their greatest album to date.

FOO FIGHTERS
In Your Honour, 2005

Veering from their heaviest material to their most laidback, this double-disc feast showcases Dave Grohl and pals on top, hook-tastic, riff-hungry form.

ALABAMA THUNDERPUSSY
Staring At The Divine, 2002

A stoner rock band with plenty of Southern-fried swagger and bumpkin soul in the tank, these beard-wearers are the great unsung heroes of the scene. We salute you!

THE ANSWER
Rise, 2007

Northern Ireland has produced many great bands, but few blaze as brightly as The Answer. Their debut had it all: the riffs, the tunes, the soul and the timelessness.

CLUTCH
Blast Tyrant, 2004

A peerless live act and prolific studio entity, Clutch are widely adored for many reasons, including this glorious collection of highly literate, badass grooves.

DIXIE WITCH
Smoke And Mirrors, 2006

Honed by years of touring, these whisky-stinkin' Texans were on blistering form on their third album, serving up a fiery, power-trio masterclass.

FLOODGATE
Penalty, 1996

Led by former Exhorder frontman Kyle Thomas, Floodgate only made one album, but it's a fearsome, heroic, brooding assault of swamp metal riffs and Marlboro-ravaged bellowing. Classy.

MASTERS OF REALITY
Deep In The Hole, 2001

Not content with producing Kyuss and co-inventing stoner rock, Chris Goss also makes stunning records with his own band. This is the best of the lot.

OPEN HAND
You And Me, 2005

Indie rockers who strayed down the stoner path, Open Hand brought eclectic flair and psychedelic ingenuity to the bong party on this colourful gem.

PRIDE & GLORY
Pride & Glory, 1994

Zakk Wylde proved he was far more than Ozzy's sidekick with this matchless collection of Southern rock anthems and country-tinged blues metal epics.

RAGING SLAB
Raging Slab, 1989

A swaggering storm of Skynyrd-meets-Zeppelin rock'n'roll, these Hooversville die-hards burned brightly but briefly on this seminal salvo from the bar-room floor.

ROADSAW
Rawk N' Roll, 2002

The title says it all. Roadsaw kicked a huge amount of arse on songs like *Bad Ass Rising* and the self-explanatory *That's Mr. Motherfucker To You.*

SCREAMING TREES
Sweet Oblivion, 1992

Crowned by the unmistakably haggard and ragged voice of Mark Lanegan, these grunge associates peaked with this gloomy missive from the Seattle shadows.

SIXTY WATT SHAMAN
Seed Of Decades, 2000

Balls-out stoner metal from Baltimore, Maryland, this low-slung riff bonanza absolutely reeked of trucker caps and backyard wrestling. Redneck rock at its finest.

QUEENS OF THE STONE AGE
QOTSA, 1998

Before the media attention and the high-profile collaborations, Queens Of The Stone Age simply ruled. Their thunderous debut more than lived up to those Kyuss-inspired expectations.

CORROSION OF CONFORMITY
Deliverance, 1994

From hardcore heroes to stoner rock standard-bearers, COC have done it all, but they've never sounded better than they did on this album. Big riffs galore.

BIG GUNS

The kings of modern rock.

ALICE IN CHAINS
Dirt, 1992

A heavy metal band at heart, AIC plumbed the emotional depths on this stone-cold classic. A very special band on unbeatable form.

SOUNDGARDEN
Badmotorfinger, 1991

Squeezing the Black Sabbath ethos through their own esoteric prism, Soundgarden obliterated their peers here with ageless classics like *Rusty Cage* and *Jesus Christ Pose.*

PEARL JAM
Ten, 1991

Alive, Even Flow, Jeremy, Black... there aren't many albums in history that boast as many truly great rock songs as *Ten.* For most people, this remains Pearl Jam's greatest work.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Steel Panther's Stix Zadinia picks five hair and glam metal treasures.

POISON

Look What The Cat Dragged In, 1986

"It's not about the songs so much. It's the story of Poison, these guys from Pennsylvania who came to LA, put fuckin' make-up on and made their hair high and flyered the fuck out of this city. They proved it was possible to make it if you looked good enough."

RATT

Out Of The Cellar, 1984

"That was a huge record, dude. *Wanted Man*? That's straight-up LA metal. It was before *Appetite...*, so those guys were way ahead. Bobby Blotzer [drums] is a good friend. He really wore Spandex right, especially in the *Round And Round* video."

QUIET RIOT

Metal Health, 1983

"It was very influential – the first heavy metal record to go to Number One on the *Billboard* chart. It proved that hair metal was a viable fuckin' commodity. And the fuckin' mask on that guy on the cover? Totally awesome!"

WARRANT

Dirty Rotten Filthy Stinking Rich, 1989

"That's a fun record. I don't know what happened after that, though. I've got a couple of buddies in Warrant, but I don't know what happened to Jani Lane. You should do a regular article in *Metal Hammer* called 'What happened to Jani Lane?' and every month you could write about another crazy exploit. He's out of his mind!"

LITA FORD

Out For Blood, 1983

"The only reason is the cover. It's her in a spider's web. Let's leave it there. I don't really need to listen to Lita Ford's record, I just need to look at the album cover. I'll listen to *Appetite For Destruction* and look at Lita's album cover. That's the party right there!"

ALICE COOPER

The godfather of shock picks 10 albums that put shock into rock.

"I was always into the British invasion of music, we were all into The Yardbirds and things like that. And then we heard Frank Zappa's **MOTHERS OF INVENTION** and their *Freak Out* [1966] album and we were all like, 'You've got to be kidding?' It was just so different from anything else out there. Not only was Zappa criticising plastic people, he was also criticising the hippies and the rock musicians. We loved it. Although I lived in Arizona, we knew all the bands from LA, The Doors, Love... But when I moved to Detroit I'd never actually heard of bands like **THE STOOGES** or the MC5. But The Stooges' *Funhouse* [1970] was the album that did it for me. They were relentless – you'd see Iggy with peanut butter smeared all over him at gigs. I felt he was a kindred spirit. Very shocking. He still makes me smile.

"I have to choose my own *Welcome To My Nightmare* [1975]. It's definitely one of my favourite **ALICE COOPER** albums. An album I couldn't have made without the genius of [producer] Bob Ezrin. He just took what we'd done and made it so much more creepy – things like *Steven* and *Cold Ethyl*. It's a great album to listen to. **TWISTED SISTER** were a definite Alice Cooper kind of band, and they were always very open about it, but then so were bands like Kiss and Mötley Crüe, to be honest. But Dee Snider invented this insane clown character, which I loved. The hair and make-up were just too big. It was great. I really like *Stay Hungry* [1983], which sounded to me very much like an extension of what Slade were doing as well as me. They were like a Long Island Alice Cooper. They write anthems that united the kids and that the parents hated. I remember recording *Be Chrool To Your Scuel* on the album after this one [*Come Out And Play*]. That was fun.

"Now, the first time I ever heard **ZODIAC MINDWARP AND THE LOVE REACTION** I remember thinking, 'Aha, now here's a British version of Alice.' I really liked the way he writes, and his first ever album, *Tattooed Beat Messiah* [1988], really struck a chord with me – but sadly I never saw the band live, and to be honest I'm not really certain what the band did after this record came out. I do remember I played with some of the guys in his band [Zodiac band members Cobalt Stargazer, Flash Bastard and Slam Thunderhide appeared alongside Slash and Axl Rose on a cover of Alice's *Under My Wheels* that featured in the film *The Decline Of Western Civilisation Part 2*].

GENRE DEFINING

Stix on the original hair metal.

Def Leppard
PYROMANIA, 1983

"It put hair metal on the map with *Photograph*, and Joe Elliott's sleeveless Union Jack shirt was totally bitching! The songs are all fuckin' epic. They're all classic songs. You can't fuck with that record."

Bon Jovi
SLIPPERY WHEN WET, 1986

"Nobody had better hair than the guys in Bon Jovi. Except for the keyboard player. That album is just hit after hit. Jon Bon Jovi can do no wrong. He's livin' on a prayer, dude."

*Mötley Crüe_*
SHOUT AT THE DEVIL, 1983

"Just bitching! They raised the bar on the theatrics. When that album came out, I opened it up and there were four pictures of the dudes and it was game on, motherfucker!

Guns N' Roses
APPETITE FOR DESTRUCTION, 1987

"If you're making a top five and you don't have this, then you're fucking insane or you're a poser. And you can print that! Every single song on that fuckin' record is epic.

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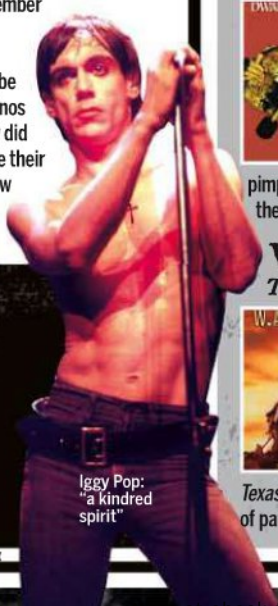
Manson and co: antichrist superstars

I always felt that Zodiac himself could be the UK's next Arthur Brown.

"Now we'd had all-girl bands like The Runaways and The Go-Gos and they were cute and they were great. But **HOLE** were threatening. They pulled no punches, and an album like *Live Through This* [1994] is shock rock personified. It really has all the credentials. I thought Courtney Love would be a massive star when I heard this album. She shines onstage, but it's when she's bored and has got nothing to do that she gets into trouble. I realised **NINE INCH NAILS** were pretty special when I first heard *Head Like A Hole*. It was heavy but had a great melody to it. They always struck me very much as road warriors, futuristic Hells Angels even. Then with *The Downward Spiral* [1994] Trent Reznor got even more industrial. It's a lot deeper as an album too. He kind of reminded me of an industrial version of Lou Reed. I should mention **MARILYN MANSON** too. Something like *Antichrist Superstar* [1996] I come to blows with theologically, but musically it's very good. He's good at pushing buttons, even mine.

"I'm going to be touring with **ROB ZOMBIE** soon and I look on him like my little brother. Really, talking to him is like talking to a family member. He really understands the humour in horror films, because good horror is just OTT comedy, really. *Hellbilly Deluxe* [1998] is like a tattoo parlour coming to life. It is derivative of Alice Cooper but more industrial and with a great sense of humour. **SLIPKNOT** have humour too. I remember seeing them play and they were devastating. Then I met them backstage and thought, 'This can't be Slipknot.' They were sat there in chinos and GAP shirts. Then I realised they did what I did: create personalities. Like their album *Iowa* [2001] – it's a scarecrow thing. Because all they see in Iowa is cornfields and scarecrows!"


Iggy Pop: "a kindred spirit"

IAN DICKSON/REX

Whitesnake
1987, 1987

"Whitesnake are just totally bitching. I'm just going to say 'David Coverdale' and then I'm going to leave it there. It's fucking Whitesnake. It's David fucking Coverdale. What else can I say, dude?"

SCHOOL OF SHOCK

Hammer's handpicked delightful, disgraceful decuple.

SEX PISTOLS
Never Mind The Bollocks..., 1977

Having made national headlines by calling daytime TV host Bill Grundy a "fucking rotter!" live on air, the Sex Pistols endeared themselves further with this obnoxious slab of brilliance. This, despite Sid Vicious, who couldn't play a note and was later arrested for stabbing his girlfriend to death.

REVOLTING COCKS
Linger Ficken' Good, 1993

Already banned from performing in the UK, Al Jourgensen's 'other band' were truly out of control by the time they recorded this warped masterpiece. A human guinea pig to acid guru Timothy Leary (who guests on the album), Al developed a fascination with barnyard animals. Yes, you should be scared.

THE STOOGES
Fun House, 1970

The same year Black Sabbath invented heavy metal, The Stooges were two albums into inventing punk rock with tracks like *TV Eye* and *Loose*. Frontman Iggy Pop, meanwhile, was cross-dressing, injecting heroin onstage, and taking on entire biker gangs while wearing a tutu. Marvellous.

KILLING JOKE
Pandemonium, 1994

Their singer has a reported IQ of 190 and puts curses on people. Their bassist was committed to a mental institution after walking naked down London's King's Road burning money. Their guitarist... well, you don't want to know. *Pandemonium*, therefore, is a work of genius.

DWARVES
...Are Young And Good Looking, 1997

Recently evicted from Sub Pop for pretending their frequently naked guitarist had been murdered in a bar fight, Dwarves returned on Epitaph with their finest work yet. Armed with classics about Satanism and pimping one's ho, they played a 67-second showcase and then smashed everything on the stage.

WASP
The Last Command, 1985

With their self-titled debut WASP were already a prime target for the Tipper Gore-led PMRC. Their sophomore album charted at Number 47 on the *Billboard 100*, and tracks such as *Wild Child*, *Blind In Texas* and *Fist Full Of Diamonds* put them on the hit list of parents the world over.

TURBONEGRO
Ass Cobra, 1996

A heroin-addicted Viking clan meet a transvestite sailors' convention in a Norwegian whorehouse where the only music is Alice Cooper and Poison Idea. After a police raid, five of those who escape form Turbonegro and write *I Got Erection*. Ask them, it's all absolutely true!

OZZY OSBOURNE
Blizzard Of Ozz, 1980

Having been elbowed from Black Sabbath for drug and alcohol abuse (pot/kettle anyone?) the Double O made the ultimate comeback with such classics as *Crazy Train* and *Mr Crowley*. Mind, this didn't stop him pissing on the Alamo, snorting ants, or trying to murder his wife.

GG ALLIN
Freaks, Faggots, Drunks + Junkies, 1988

Home to such family favourites as *Sleeping In My Piss* and *Suck My Ass It Smells, Freaks, Faggots...* was the follow-up to the ever-anthemic *Expose Yourself To Kids*. GG is, or rather, was, available for children's parties and weddings, but he's dead now.

POISON IDEA
Feel The Darkness, 1990

One of the best hardcore punk albums ever made, *Feel The Darkness* showcased everything that made Poison Idea so legendary and so dangerous. Frontman Jerry A sliced his own face with broken glass, breathed fire, and pulled a loaded gun on Dwarves singer Blag Dahlia. Back away slowly.

FUN BOX

Three perfect power ballad records.

SKID ROW
Slave To The Grind, 1991

The last of the great hard rock/metal albums of the era, it hosted the heaviest rock we'd ever heard. Sass, sex, solos and sleaze – perfect.

VAN HALEN
For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge, 1991

An underrated album from Sammy Hagar-era Halen and features the classic dancefloor/air guitar anthem, *Poundcake*. Don't dis the Van Hagar!

THUNDER
Back Street Symphony, 1990

The London rockers' debut packed a solid punch of anthemic hard rock, from the title track to *Dirty Love* and the timeless ballad *Love Walked In*.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five Hammer-approved hardcore milestones.

HATEBREED

Perseverance, 2002

They'd been plying their trade in metallic hardcore since 1994 but they finally hit paydirt on this collection of pit-igniting anthems. No album is more responsible for the resurrection of the beatdown than Hatebreed's *Perseverance*. Fact.

GALLOWS

Orchestra Of Wolves, 2006

British hardcore was resurrected in just under 35 vitriolic minutes on this scud-missile of an album. UK hardcore is thriving like never before in 2010: *Orchestra...* is the reason.

REFUSED

The Shape Of Punk To Come, 1998

It's mindblowing to think that an album released 12 years ago can still sound like punk rock from the future. Influencing everyone from the Lostprophets to United Nations, this album from the Swedish pioneers is essential for any hardcore fan.

CONVERGE

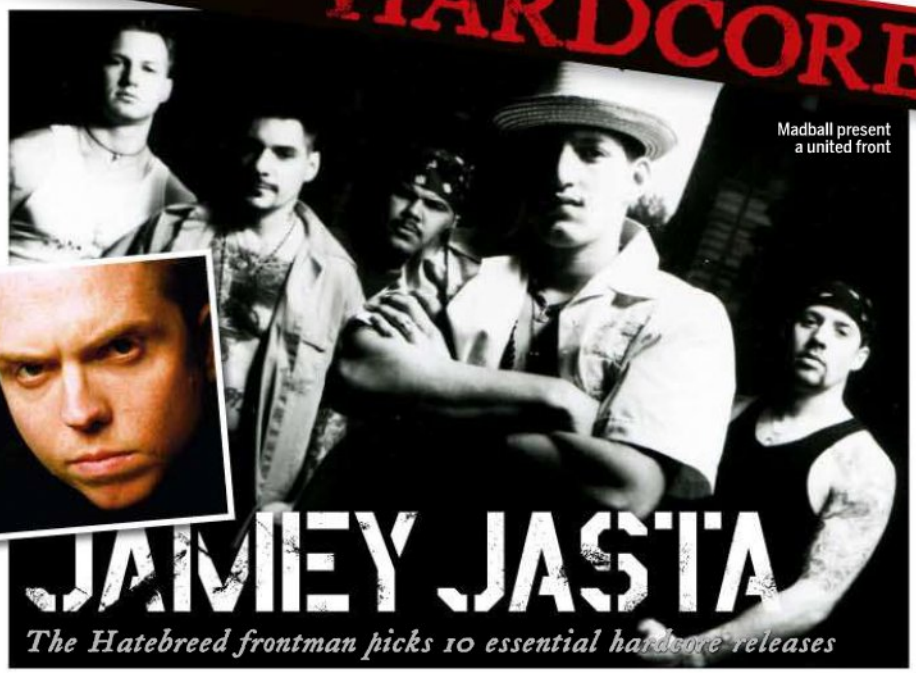
Jane Doe, 2001

Volatile and bleak, intensely extreme and one of the most emotionally raw sets of lyrics ever to grace music, Converge's uncompromising and brutal masterwork resonated with everyone from emo kids to the black metal fraternity.

GLASSJAW

Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Silence, 2000

Often imitated but never bettered, Glassjaw's seminal *Everything...* was vital to the burgeoning screamo scene, and remains screamo's finest hour. Its chances of ever being capped are slim-to-none.



Madball present a united front

JAMEY JASTA

The Hatebreed frontman picks 10 essential hardcore releases

"**MADBALL**'s *Set It Off* [1994] is pretty much my favourite hardcore album ever. It's 26 minutes of the most mean-faced, street-level, awesome hardcore. You hear them in nearly every hardcore band around today. **WARZONE**'s *Don't Forget The Struggle, Don't Forget The Streets* [1988] is another record that stands the test of time. There's not a bad song on it and from the cover to the songs, it just creates a camaraderie between punks, skinheads, pretty much everyone that'd be associated with hardcore. **YOUTH OF TODAY**'s *Break Down The Walls* [1987] has classic songs all the way through. There's something about Ray Cappo's voice that sounds so insane but he delivers those messages of solidarity and positive thinking that are just the greatest thing. I don't think there's one song on that record longer than two and a half minutes. I got **BIOHAZARD**'s *Biohazard* [1990] on my 14th birthday. They were crossing over into metal but it's a New York hardcore record. It's a crazy pit-inciting record. I like *Urban Discipline* too but this is more my thing. I had **LEEWAY**'s *Desperate Measures* [1991] and kids at my school said, 'You have to get *Born To Expire* [1989]' and they were totally right! AJ Novello was an amazing songwriter and this record has non-stop jams.

"**DRI**'s *Dealing With It* [1985] is important in bringing metal to hardcore, even though they're more of a thrash band. There's maybe one song over two minutes but that's a hardcore punk album, for sure. People didn't like when **SICK OF IT ALL** went through their metallic sound-change but I didn't think it was too far away from the hardcore stuff. It had that amazing Normandy sound. I had *Blood, Sweat And No Tears* [1989] but *Just Look Around* [1992] had a better sound. **SHEER TERROR**'s *Just Can't Hate Enough* [1990] is an angry album! I like a lot of posi-core [*positive hardcore – Genres Ed*] but every now and then, it's good to have a pissed-off, 'I don't give a fuck about anybody' record to listen to. It came out in the early 90s and it's just a mean, pissed-off, angry record. What I love about **JUDGE**'s *Bringin' It Down* [1989] album is John Porcelly added a really metallic edge to the record. It was like a straight-edge take on a harder-edged sound. Gang vocals, emotional lyrics but hard and tough. **MINOR THREAT** were a massive influence on Youth Of Today and Gorilla Biscuits. If I had to pick a record, I'd pick *Out Of Step* [1983]. Both EPs are great too but *Betrayed* and *Think Again* are classic songs."

Sick Of It All's Pete Koller: blood, sweat but no tears

GENRE DEFINING

Jamey approves these landmark releases.

Black Flag

DAMAGED, 1981

"It pre-dates absolutely everything. I give it my respect and it's a classic. The cover with the broken mirror and the unmistakable logo, you can still look at it and go, 'Wow!'"

Bad Brains

I AGAINST I, 1986

"They branched out like no one before them. They're a great band that bring people from all walks of life together – punks, hippies, reggae guys – and they were catchy and heart-felt and a lot more technical than people think."

Cro-Mags

THE AGE OF QUARREL, 1986

"You hear all of the stories of how they influenced Metallica and they toured with everyone from Discharge to Motörhead to Sabbath. I like pretty much every song on the record."

Agnostic Front

CAUSE FOR ALARM, 1986

ONE VOICE, 1992

"It's a tie with these two records. I got into *One Voice* and it was life-changing when I heard it in 1992. The Vinnie Stigma [guitar]/Roger Miret [vocals] sound is untouchable."

Gorilla Biscuits

START TODAY, 1989

"It's a positive record with punk direction and classic songs. The title track is one of the best moshes ever. They influenced hardcore bands as well as AFI, New Found Glory and Good Charlotte. They had it all going on."

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five Hammer-approved power and prog genre-benders.

BLIND GUARDIAN

A Night At The Opera, 2002

Germany's Blind Guardian were among the first and best groups to give power metal a European twist. This mid-period album offers operatic vocals, layered harmonies, myriad time changes and a 14-minute ode to the Trojan War.

THE MARS VOLTA

De-Loused In The Comatorium, 2003

Omar Rodriguez-Lopez and Cedric Bixler-Zavala's heads were exploding with ideas after walking out on At The Drive-In, but few expected their next step would be as mindblowing as this.

KATATONIA

The Great Cold Distance, 2006

As the Swedish band rejected growled vocals, hyper-speed tempos and doom-laden time signatures once and for all, so their intricacy spiralled. The transition undoubtedly cost the Mikael Åkerfeldt-approved group some fans, but also endeared them to a whole new audience.

PORCUPINE TREE

Fear Of A Blank Planet, 2007

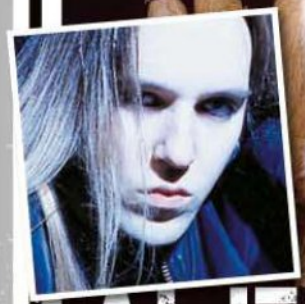
Having abandoned his quest for radio play, Steven Wilson attained a breakthrough by recruiting King Crimson's Robert Fripp and Alex Lifeson from Rush for a six-song concept album that by turns spat vitriol at and offered a searing lament to the decline of modern society. What a delicious irony.

MASTODON

Crack The Skye, 2009

Adding keyboards and toning down the death-growls, this concept record about Tsarist Russia confirmed that Mastodon's own artistic growth reflected the public's growing appetite for sludgy, thrash-based riffs and ambitious song structures.

Manowar: heavy metal loin-hearts



ALEXI LAIHO

The Children Of Bodom frontman picks 10 of the best power metal releases.

"I really like some of **STRATOVARIUS**'s older stuff. But *Visions* [1997] isn't just one of my favourite power metal albums, it's one of my favourite albums in general. That's a fuckin' awesome record. It's funny because I really stopped listening to modern power metal a while back, when all the bands started competing with each other and the scene started to piss me off, but I really like **EDGUY**'s first album, *Kingdom Of Madness* [1997] – it's incredible. **HELLOWEEN**'s *Keeper Of The Seven Keys Parts 1 & 2* [1987, 1988] are two albums but I always think of them as one! They're fuckin' legendary. The thing about Helloween is that they really made awesome albums but they also incorporated their own sense of humour into the music, and I always liked that, because we've recorded some pretty crazy shit ourselves. After their singer Michael Kiske left I didn't follow the band, although the new singer was OK, it wasn't about that – I just preferred the earlier albums.

"**YNGWIE J MALMSTEEN'S** *Rising Force* [1984] is old-school shit, but I think *Odyssey* [1988] was the most power metal-ish album Yngwie ever did. When it comes to new power metal bands I really haven't heard too many of them, but old stuff like this rules.

"The term 'power metal' means something else to me, at least if we're talking about music from the old days –

GENRE DEFINING

The albums that gave birth to prog.

King Crimson
IN THE COURT OF THE CRIMSON KING: AN OBSERVATION, 1969

Progressive metal's ground zero. Oblique, dark and without any regard for the mainstream, this remarkable debut album was recently remixed for 5.1 by Steven Wilson, who made it sound even more disconcerting.

Fates Warning
AWAKEN THE GUARDIAN, 1986

Connecticut's Fates Warning were among the very first bands to weld smouldering metal to the excesses of prog. Their third album set the template, whisking the listener away on a musicianly, sword'n'sorcery-fuelled astral journey.

Queensrÿche
OPERATION: MINDCRIME, 1988

If Fates Warning set the bar, Queensrÿche took progressive metal to unforeseen Olympian heights, selling millions of copies of their third album, which offered soaring songs and a storyline of love, brainwashing, politics, religion and murder.

Savatage
GUTTER BALLET, 1989

Founded as pure, skull-crushing metalheads, this Floridian band's career had all but hit the skids until a career-transforming introduction of light and shade. It's a toss-up between this, their fifth album, or 1991's *Streets: A Rock Opera*, but both are essential.

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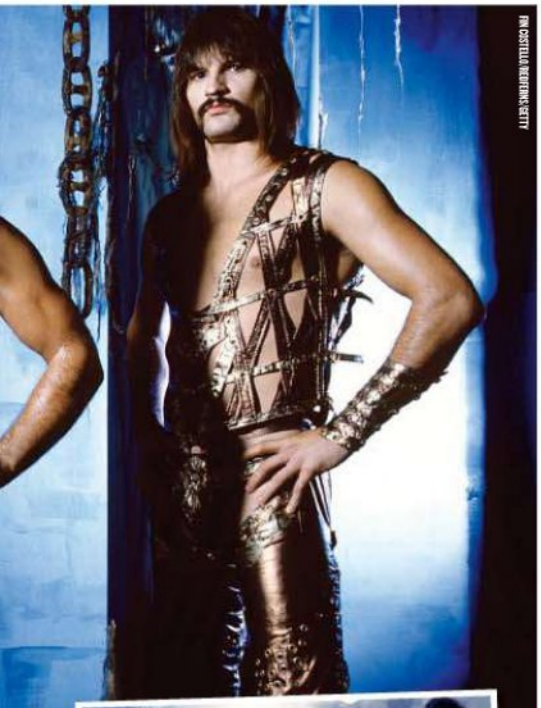

FIN CASTELLA/REDFERNS/GETTY

BERND MÜLLER/REDFERNS/GETTY

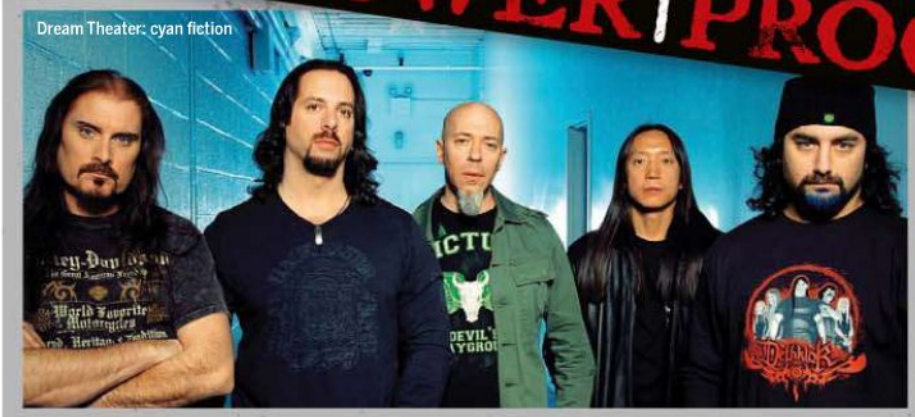
Helloween master the science of power metal

it meant bands like **JUDAS PRIEST** and albums like *Screaming For Vengeance* [1982]. What's funny is that when I was a kid I thought that 'Judas Priest' was the actual name of the singer, Rob Halford, ha ha! I've got two Priest albums on this list but I don't care – they're such an amazing band. *Painkiller* [1990] was actually the first Judas Priest album I ever heard. I was 10 or 11 years old when it came out, and I saw the video on a TV show back in the day. They showed the clip for the song *Painkiller* and I was like, 'Holy motherfuckin' shit! What is this?!' The drum intro is so badass and the riffing is so amazing and Rob Halford's singing is so shrill and mean... it totally blew me away.

"I love **GAMMA RAY** – in fact, I just like Kai Hansen in general. If you're gonna talk about power metal, he's definitely one of the guys that I show all due respect to. Take your pick which Gamma Ray album it is, I don't really care! Maybe *Heading For Tomorrow* [1990]. I can't help it, but I love the first **RHAPSODY OF FIRE** album, *Legendary Tales* [1997], back before they changed their name [from Rhapsody]. It's a bit of a skeleton in my closet, but they're great musicians. Finally I'd have to pick **MANOWAR**'s *Kings Of Metal* [1988]. Fuck yeah, dude! I have a really controversial attitude about Manowar. Most people think they're pretty funny but secretly everybody loves them. *Kings Of Metal* is the shit and *Hail To England* [1984] is a pretty good one, too. I love 80s music in general, actually."

Dream Theater
IMAGES AND WORDS, 1992

After a false start with an ill-fitting vocalist, Dream Theater found James LaBrie, signed to a major label and established themselves as a force to be reckoned with via this watershed second album, which contained their only 'hit', *Pull Me Under*.


Dream Theater: cyan fiction

DREAM THEATER

Keyboardist Jordan Rudess takes us through his 10 essential prog releases.

EMERSON, LAKE & PALMER
Tarkus, 1971

"Although the way that keyboard player Keith Emerson used his instrument almost as a guitar has since become very commonplace in progressive music, *Tarkus* was a record of such power and overblown ambition, it blew me away the first time I heard it."

YES
Close To The Edge, 1972

"On *Close To The Edge*, Yes's music was so grand that it was almost unreal. It was just glorious. With Dream Theater we have definitely tried to tap into the whole expansive scope of records like *Close To The Edge* and *Trick Of The Tail* by Genesis."

KING CRIMSON
Starless And Bible Black, 1974

"With his love of distortion, [guitarist] Robert Fripp's music has always had a strong metal identity. His forward-thinking mentality has rubbed off on just about every album from Dream Theater and he definitely influenced the whole math-metal thing."

RUSH
Moving Pictures, 1981

"For a band with around 20 albums to their name, Rush have gone through lots of different phases. I don't like all of them, but *Moving Pictures* is the album that really turned me onto them and influenced me the most. The songs on it are just incredible."

SPOCK'S BEARD
Day For Night, 1999

"It's a shame Spock's Beard are a fairly unknown name as anybody that is interested in King Crimson and Gentle Giant would appreciate them. Had those bands continued along their earliest, mighty paths they might have sounded something like Spock's Beard."

OPETH
Blackwater Park, 2001

"With the scales they use and their whole harmonic darkness thing, Opeth's sound very much tips its hat towards King Crimson. *Blackwater Park*, which was produced by my friend Steve Wilson [of Porcupine Tree], is a record I have on my iPod."

PORCUPINE TREE
Deadwing, 2005

"Though it was recorded before the band really broke through, this is the one of theirs that I probably listen to the most. I also like *Lightbulb Sun* [2000], which saw the band trying to get hit singles, but *Deadwing* is the album I always come back to."

TOOL
10,000 Days, 2006

"I'm not the biggest Tool fan in Dream Theater; that distinction goes to John Myung [bassist], and he is the one who tends to write something that sounds like them, sometimes disturbingly so. Their use of hypnotic rhythms has definitely rubbed off on us."

SYMPHONY X
Paradise Lost, 2007

"Musically, rhythmically and harmonically Symphony X do the progressive metal thing so incredibly well. Russell Allen has a terrific voice and, like me, and Dream Theater generally, they are massively influenced by the whole classical side of things."

COHEED AND CAMBRIA
No World For Tomorrow, 2007

"It's great that Coheed And Cambria are bringing this form of music to a new, younger audience. Claudio Sanchez has an interesting voice that sounds like Geddy Lee of Rush, which I really relate to and it's one of the reasons why I like them so much."

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Hammer-approved sludge metal must-haves.

CROWBAR

Crowbar, 1993

From their impressive bellies to their devastating riffs, Crowbar set out to be the heaviest band on the planet. Their self-titled debut was produced by Phil Anselmo and still sounds like a herd of bonged-out buffalo stamping on our hopes and dreams.

EYEHATEGOD

Take As Needed For Pain, 1993

Permanently up to their necks in chaos – drug problems and brushes with the law – Eyehategod took the slow tempos and dark shadows of Sabbath into the darkest territory imaginable.

IRON MONKEY

Iron Monkey, 1995

The UK's answer to Eyehategod were somehow even heavier than their forebears. Fronted by throat-mangling madman Johnny Morrow, Nottingham's resident five-man nightmare emerged from the gutter, all veins bulging, and crushed all-comers with their swivel-eyed hymns to degeneracy.

BUZZOV.EN

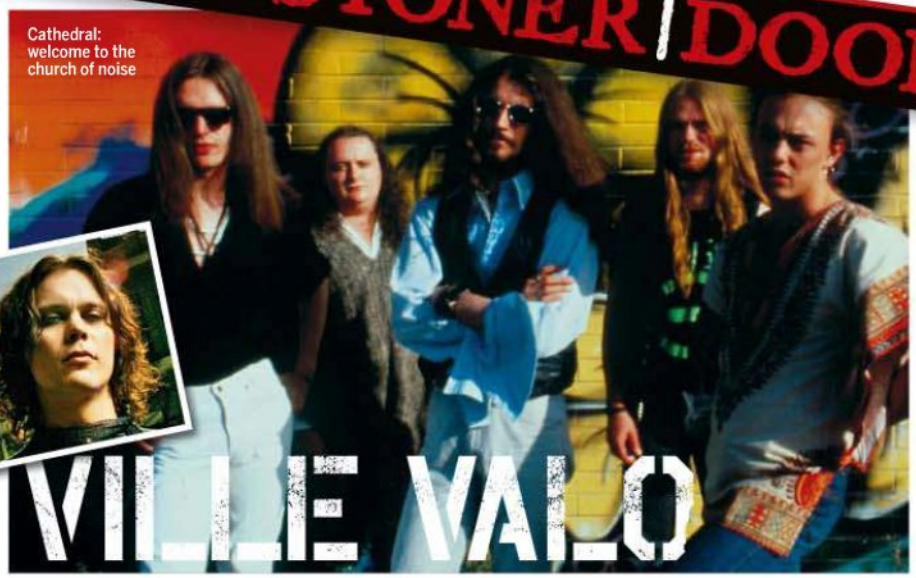
Sore, 1994

With a reputation for furious, violent live shows, and a uniquely twisted sound that veered from pounding sludge to ferocious crusty punk, Buzzov.en were the ultimate badass swamp metal band.

MASTODON

Remission, 2002

Bringing evolutionary fervour and a dash of prog rock ingenuity to the world of sludge, Mastodon began their incredible journey on this riff-packed monument to intelligent heaviness. The sound of the dirty South would never be the same again.



Cathedral: welcome to the church of noise

VILLE VALO

The thin white duke of love metal picks 10 troops of doom.

"**BLACK SABBATH**'s *Black Sabbath* [1970] was the start of it all – the tolling bell off in the distance. People talked about other bands like Blue Cheer, but none of them had the pounding metal of what doom needs to be doom. There are so few bands that wrote songs that transport you to another world. For me, **CATHEDRAL** are one of the only real doomsters: it's so fucking slow and so miserable and so dark, it's nearly unlistenable and I love it to death. I love the artwork and the photos and the lyrics on *Forest Of Equilibrium* [1991] – all of it was mindblowing. This... is... doom. I'd have to pick their latest album too, *The Guessing Game* [2010]. They have changed so much. I know the broad and colourful set of influences everyone in that band has and this is the first time they've nailed it: Frank Zappa, bizarre folk, with Trouble [get 1984's *Psalm 9*! – Ed], with Sabbath... it's crazy! It's exhilarating, scary and funny at the same time. A psychedelic trip.

"*Serenades* [1993] was **ANATHEMA**'s first album and the first album of theirs that I heard. Everything these guys were doing was like a revelation at that time. **MY DYING BRIDE**'s *Symphonaire Infernus Et Spera Empyrium* EP [1991] was epic. They played the title song *Symphonaire Infernus*... on *Headbanger's Ball* and I was like, 'What the fuck is this?' Super-slow, monolithically gothic and with Latin lyrics – I was hooked. You'll realise that 12 minutes have passed and you've been transported – and that doesn't happen with a Christina Aguilera song.

"**PARADISE LOST**'s *Gothic* [1991] was more like death metal but slower, with a more metallic vibe that would break into a gothic feel. It was a very influential time, and when we started the band HIM, so it was a big inspiration for us. **TYPE O NEGATIVE**'s *Bloody Kisses* [1993] has a Danzig-like darkness: the American gothic and Euro gothic and the doom with the title-track. The dirge-like 10-minute song about the family cat that died. I love that they made this funereal long, bleak, heavy song about the passing of a cat.

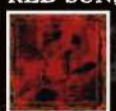
"**ELECTRIC WIZARD** *Witchcult Today* [2007]... There's just something about Electric Wizard that sucks you in, and that should be the magic of music and rock'n'roll. What you want to do is go to a high-end studio where they make Phil Collins records and play this: it's just like *boooooooooom*! Next I'd pick **ROKY ERICKSON AND THE ALIENS**' *The Evil One* [1981]. Roky Erickson was from the 13th Floor Elevators. He got arrested for holding weed and opted for a mental institution over prison where they experimented on him. He was never the same again. This one album is very influential. Finally I'd recommend *Witchburner* [1984] by **MERCY**. It's Messiah from Candlemass's previous band. The track *I'm Your Pervert Priest* has the lyric: '*When I fuck a nun I make her come, when you don't see us you lick her cunt/I'm your pervert priest*'. It was so nasty and so wrong, it's like, 'What's wrong with you?!'"

GENRE DEFINING

The albums that created stoner rock.

Kyuss

BLUES FOR THE RED SUN, 1992



Planned or not, Kyuss defined stoner rock on their second album. Insanely heavy and driven by Josh Homme's throbbing guitar sound, the seminal Sabbath rumble was reinvented.

Sleep

SLEEP'S HOLY MOUNTAIN, 1992

Ruined by marijuana and proudly psychedelic from first till last, stoner doom's ultimate power trio never bettered this hulking, pentatonic tour-de-force.

Monster Magnet

SUPERJUDGE, 1993

Drenched in kitsch B-movie imagery and the acid casualty's lexicon, Dave Wyndorf's space cadets were stoner rock's first big success, and their trashy ascent towards rock'n'roll glory began here.

Down

NOLA, 1995

Led by Phil Anselmo and also featuring members of Crowbar, Corrosion Of Conformity and Eyehategod, Down were stoner rock's first super-group. Their debut remains a peerless feast of weed-stained riffs.

Electric Wizard

COME MY FANATICS, 1997

Skull-flattening doom at its most misanthropic and brutal, Dorset's drug-guzzling horror fiends destroyed your speakers and sanity on this, their epic second album.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five ear-stabbing essentials.

CANNIBAL CORPSE

The Bleeding, 1994

The biggest seller from death metal's most successful band was vocalist Chris Barnes' swansong, but he went out in style with some of the Buffalo crew's most brutal songs, *Fucked With A Knife* and the censor-baiting *Stripped, Raped And Strangled.*

EMPEROR

Anthems To The Welkin At Dusk, 1997

Following the groundbreaking majesty of *In The Nightside Eclipse*, Emperor's second full album smashed the opposition with its intensely elaborate and literate re-imagining of black metal's atmospheric principles and sublime intricacy.

AT THE GATES

Slaughter Of The Soul, 1995

Masters and creators of 'the Gothenburg sound' alongside In Flames and Dark Tranquillity, At The Gates were already underground heroes, but *Slaughter...* was a slab of melodic death metal perfection that would become one of the most influential metal albums of all time.

CRADLE OF FILTH

Dusk And Her Embrace, 1996

Britain's response to Norway's black metal explosion was a more considered, theatrical and traditional affair, but Cradle Of Filth were always a superb metal band first and foremost, and this was where they transcended their origins and became a genuine phenomenon. A deliciously grand vision realised.

DIMMU BORGIR

Puritanical Euphoric Misanthropia, 2001

Grim to the core but proudly ambitious, Dimmu outgrew their shadowy origins on this impossibly bold and belligerent monument to the dark side. State-of-the-art extremity, blacker than midnight on a moonless night but dazzling in its grandeur.

IHSAHN

Ex-Emperor frontman and soloist describes what extremism means to him.

Quorthorn from Bathory: black market militant

"For me, the essence of black metal and my main black metal inspiration is *Blood Fire Death* [1988] by **BATHORY**. The impact of that record, the vocals and the whole epicness of it, was huge. You can hear that epic sound through my catalogue too, the huge reverbs and the choirs, it all served to enhance the extremity of the songs. The first few Bathory albums were great, but Quorthon [Bathory main man] showed much more versatility on *Blood Fire Death* and he was progressing through to the music with clean vocals that he did later. *Morbid Tales* [1984] by **CELTIC FROST** is important too, another essential piece for this kind of extreme music. It's so dark and there are all these echoes, these dark voices, and you can't make out a word of it, but it creates this atmosphere that was just really bad! **MORBID ANGEL**'s *Altars Of Madness* [1989] is an absolute must-have for any death metal fan and *Left Hand Path* [1990] by **ENTOMBED** was very genre-defining for death metal too. The heaviness of Entombed was very intense. It was more commercial than Morbid Angel, certainly, but just as powerful. I have to pick a **DARKTHRONE** album and although *Soulside Journey* [1991] is my favourite, from a black metal point of view, and if you want to know where black metal comes from, you have to hear *Transilvanian Hunger* [1994]. We looked up to Darkthrone when we started Emperor. We knew the early demos and we were in touch with Fenriz [Darkthrone drummer] and sat in on their rehearsals and hung out. When we were in Thou Shalt Suffer, just before we started

GENRE DEFINING

Where black and death metal was born.

Venom
WELCOME TO HELL, 1981

Without this debut album from the North East's loudest band of all time, extreme metal may never have evolved. Raw, uncompromising and ugly, this was Motörhead's ballsy blueprint dragged screaming to Hell.

Death
SCREAM BLOODY GORE, 1987

Possessed may have given the genre a name on album *Seven Churches*, but it was Chuck Schuldiner's Death who defined death metal on their primitive but ferocious debut.

Autopsy
MENTAL FUNERAL, 1991

For many, the ultimate old-school death metal band, Autopsy made music that was just as gruesome as their goofy, horror-obsessed lyrics. Their second album was a stupidly heavy vat of suffocating, satanic sludge. Awesome.

Mayhem
DE MYSTERIIS DOM SATHANAS, 1994

Shrouded in notoriety, this is Norwegian black metal's most important album and a tribute to its creator; guitarist Euronymous, murdered in 1993 by Burzum's Varg Vikernes.

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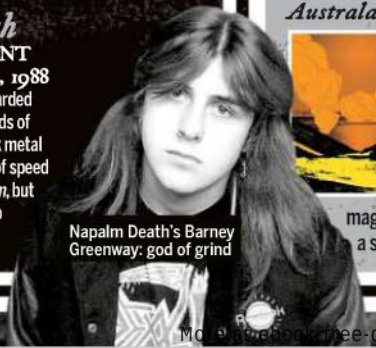
Morbid Angel: ghouls, ghouls, ghouls

Emperor, we rented a house and stayed there all summer to write and record a demo and during that time, Nocturno Culto [Darkthrone guitarist] came to visit us. We recorded two cover songs with him on drums and vocals. We did *The Usurper* and *Circle Of The Tyrants* by Celtic Frost!

"The thing that got me into a lot of this extreme metal was *Symphonies Of Sickness* [1989] by **CARCASS**. There's nothing epic about it, but it was really dark and had this low, growling voice that was completely inhuman. In the first band I played in with Samoth [Emperor guitarist], when I was 13, one of the guys played me the opening riff from *Welcome Home* from *Them* [1988] by **KING DIAMOND**. I thought the riff was so cool. I was coming from an Iron Maiden background, so it sounded very complicated but very catchy at the same time. *Them* is a concept album and it was very different from what I knew, with all the different voices he uses and Andy LaRocque's soloing too. Andy is the man. There was this amazing dark attitude to the whole record. If you want something more obscure, try **GROTESQUE**, the band that came before **AT THE GATES**. I remember listening to their *Incantation* EP [1990], which had a black and white drawing on the front. I had a very strong connection to that record and the sound of it and the vocals. It might surprise people, but for me, **METALLICA**'s *Master Of Puppets* [1986] is a very heavy and important album. It was the first album of theirs that I got into. I only had it on tape to start with, and the images I had in my head, from the acoustic guitar parts and all that, I imagined them with this very baroque clothing and with dark make-up on, but at the time they were just thrashers with jeans and leather jackets. There was nothing baroque or gothic about them at all! It's such an evocative record. You know how it is sometimes, when you suddenly think that you need to hear that album again, and I smelled the same smells that I could remember from when I was much younger and listening to *Master Of Puppets* back then, that whole flashback thing. It's such a great record. Musically, it deviated from the whole traditional metal thing, but it was still very melodic. It's not like Carcass, which was more random and atonal. It had that great mix of intensity and melody, and so many fantastic songs. Of course, if you're into extreme music and you don't own both *Ghost Reveries* and *Watershed* by **OPETH** then something is wrong! *Watershed* [2008] is not as commercial, so maybe *Ghost Reveries* [2005] is the one to hear first. In Emperor, we were fans of Opeth before they even entered a studio! We used to listen to their rehearsal tape, the one that got them signed, and look at them now! *Ghost Reveries* is such a great album."

Napalm Death
FROM ENSLAVEMENT TO OBLITERATION, 1988

Rightfully regarded as the true Gods of Grind, ND took metal to new levels of speed on debut *Scum*, but it's this feral, blistering follow-up that secured their status.


Napalm Death's Barney Greenway: god of grind

Enslaved: Born to *Ruun*

POST METAL

Hammer-approved releases that take the genre to mind-bending levels.

NEUROSIS
Through Silver In Blood, 1996

Originally a punk band, Neurosis's evolution has been one of the most fascinating stories in heavy music history. A monstrously heavy work of art, *Through Silver...* converted everyone from alternative rock fans to die-hard metalheads.

ISIS
Oceanic, 2002

Up to their knees in FX pedals and smart ideas, Boston, MA's Isis perfected their proudly cinematic and free-flowing take on extreme music on this dazzling epic, their second release. Mellifluous grooves collided with walls of shimmering guitar noises and jaws collectively hit the floor.

CULT OF LUNA
The Beyond, 2003

The bastard offspring of Neurosis and Isis, Sweden's Cult Of Luna summoned great beauty from the volcanic cacophony of their heavily layered sound. From the crushing *Receiver* to the heartbreaking *Further*, this was a magnificent trip into the void.

SWANS
The Great Annihilator, 1995

New York's undisputed art rock masters were constantly mutating. On this unsung masterpiece they veered from disorientating tornadoes of sound to the most subtle and elegant of acoustic interludes. The sound of legends leaping over boundaries.

PELICAN
Australasia, 2003

With strong and self-evident connections to doom metal and sludge, Chicago's Pelican could easily have been just another heavy band taking things slow, but *Australasia* was laced with atmospheric magic, goosebump-inducing dynamics and a spellbinding sense of wide-eyed adventure.

SUNN O)))
Flight Of The Behemoth, 2002

Conceived as a prank, Sunn O))) soon realised that their arse-threatening drones and disdain for convention was attracting a sizeable audience. On their second album, they defined themselves and reached a startling level of sonic weight, not least on a wilful dismantling of Metallica's *For Whom The Bell Tolls*.

ENSLAVED
Ruun, 2006

Ostensibly a black metal band, but one that has been ploughing a singular and thrilling furrow for many moons, Enslaved are extreme metal's cherished and lauded awkward squad, and *Ruun* is simply one of many prog-drenched recent triumphs.

TODAY IS THE DAY
Temple Of The Morning Star, 1996

Led by bug-eyed, gun-toting badass Steve Austin, TITD bring aggression and malevolence to the post-metal realm, injecting every Neurosis-like surge of sound with a harrowing degree of punk defiance and rage, as showcased on this barrage of teethgrinding riff psychosis.

THE OCEAN
Precambrian, 2007

The work of a many-headed collective, you can hear the sheer breadth of ideas at The Ocean's disposal on this sprawling paean to the Earth's formative years. With everything from guitars and drums to violins and glockenspiels in the mix, metal's vocabulary could hardly fail to expand.

ASVA
What You Don't Know Is Frontier, 2008

With notes that erupt and then resonate for what seems like days, Asva's second album is not a record for those with a short attention span. Instead, it's an emotionally draining exercise in harnessing the essence of heaviness itself. Succumb and be enlightened.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five Hammer-approved genre-mashing releases.

SKINDRED

Roots Rock Riot, 2007

Skindred invented and own ragga metal, and *RRR* cemented their reputation as both innovative artists and great songwriters. Of 12 tracks, standouts like *Trouble* and *Rat Race* were ecstatically welcomed into their already-explosive set.

DIR EN GREY

The Marrow Of A Bone, 2007

Their seventh release marked 10 years of the band. Always an enigma, the Japanese quintet combined their broad influences – NIN, Korn, Testament and Depeche Mode – to great effect.

CYPRESS HILL

Skull & Bones, 2000

Always honorary metalheads, the hip-hop group released a double disc: one of straight-up hip-hop and one of rap metal. At the height of nu metal, the Californians taught the metal set how to do it.

THE WORKHORSE MOVEMENT

Sons Of The Pioneers, 2000

An experimental mix of punk and metal riffs, psychedelic vibes and Motown soul, Workhorse toured with bands as diverse as Fishbone, Slayer and Amen. Too far ahead of their time.

THE PRODIGY

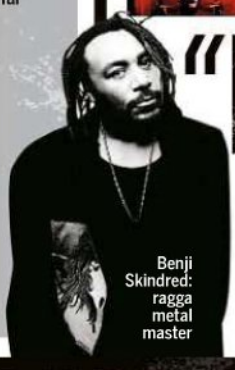
Fat Of The Land, 1997

Crowbarring minds open about what 'metal' is, this was a collision between the hardest dance breaks and futuristic punk riffing. Metal because we bloody say so.

CYPRESS HILL

ROSS HALFIN/GETTY

Sen Dog and co prove their metal credentials.



Benji Skindred: ragga metal master

"know it's pretty fresh, but once you hear **SLAYER**'s *World Painted Blood* [2009] you'll know why it's essential. I listen to more Slayer now because of this record. [Drummer] Dave Lombardo and I actually went to the same high school and we shared classes so I feel kind of connected to him in a way. **GUNS N' ROSES**' *Appetite For Destruction* [1987] has to be in there. It has a lot of rock'n'roll appeal but the whole attitude just screams metal, y'know. **SOUNDGARDEN** guitar player Kim Thayil is one of the sickest in the business, and I'm so glad that they're reuniting for Lollapalooza and we're going to be on the same bill as them. My favourite album of theirs is *Badmotorfinger* [1991].

"I gotta give Lemmy some love. **MOTÖRHEAD**'s *Ace Of Spades* [1980] album is the best, seriously. I recently picked up a best of Motörhead as well and got my head properly wrapped around that *Damage Case* song. I enjoy all the **SYSTEM OF A DOWN** stuff but *Toxicity* [2001] is their defining moment. It was the most well-rounded album – every tune is a must-play. The way they arrange their format is so different and it freaked everyone out, which is refreshing. I can't leave **SLIPKNOT** out! I loved Slipknot right away from the first time I heard their debut [*Slipknot*, 1999]. I really dig their whole get-up and all that. There are bands who can play and are good, and there are bands who 'get it', and right from this record I knew Slipknot 'got it'. I wish I was in that group, ha ha ha! Again, I could choose anything by **RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE**, but for me the first one [*Rage Against The Machine*, 1992] is their best. They are a rare band who were both influential and sounded amazing too.

"What I remember most about the early 80s was the look the heavy funk and punk funk (Rick James, Cameo) guys had: lots of leather, and those high boots – it was just like **JUDAS PRIEST**. Just to not be the odd one out I had to listen to it and I dug it! I loved *British Steel* [1980]. I loved the way **SEPULTURA** brought their native Brazilian style of music into the feel of metal. *Roots* [1996] was definitely some tribal shit – even down to the name. Me being an islander myself – from Cuba – I'm kind of drawn to that. And I don't know if **LED ZEPPELIN** qualify, but they're the fathers of metal, right?! They really brought all their influences and sounds together best on *IV* [1971]. Zeppelin weren't your average rock band, and that influenced Cypress: we didn't want to be your average hip-hop group."

HRH Kerry King: Slayer legend

GENRE DEFINING

Five albums that took heavy music into uncharted territory.

Rage Against The Machine

RATM, 1992

Aerosmith/Run DMC and Anthrax/Public Enemy started it all, but RATM's debut put the relationship between rap and metal on the map forever. Still the most pissed-off album in town.

Faith No More

ANGEL DUST, 1992

Faith No More fearlessly blended funk, metal, rap and no-boundaries experimentalism to jaw-dropping effect here. In a career chock-full of classic albums, this remains their defining moment.

System Of A Down

SOAD, 1998

Sounding like nobody before or since, SOAD's debut combined nu metal, traditional Armenian music, the Dead Kennedys and a fierce political edge in one neon-coloured atom bomb of an album.

At The Drive-In

RELATIONSHIP OF COMMAND, 2000

Influencing the worlds of metal, hardcore and punk in one fell swoop, *ROC* was achingly melodic and samurai-sharp with all the power of a David Haye right-hander, often within the same song.

Nirvana

BLEACH, 1989

Introducing punk rock ideals and no-thrills approach to mainstream rock, *Bleach* was a shotgun blast that didn't just change rock and metal, but also the way musicians of every genre thought forever.

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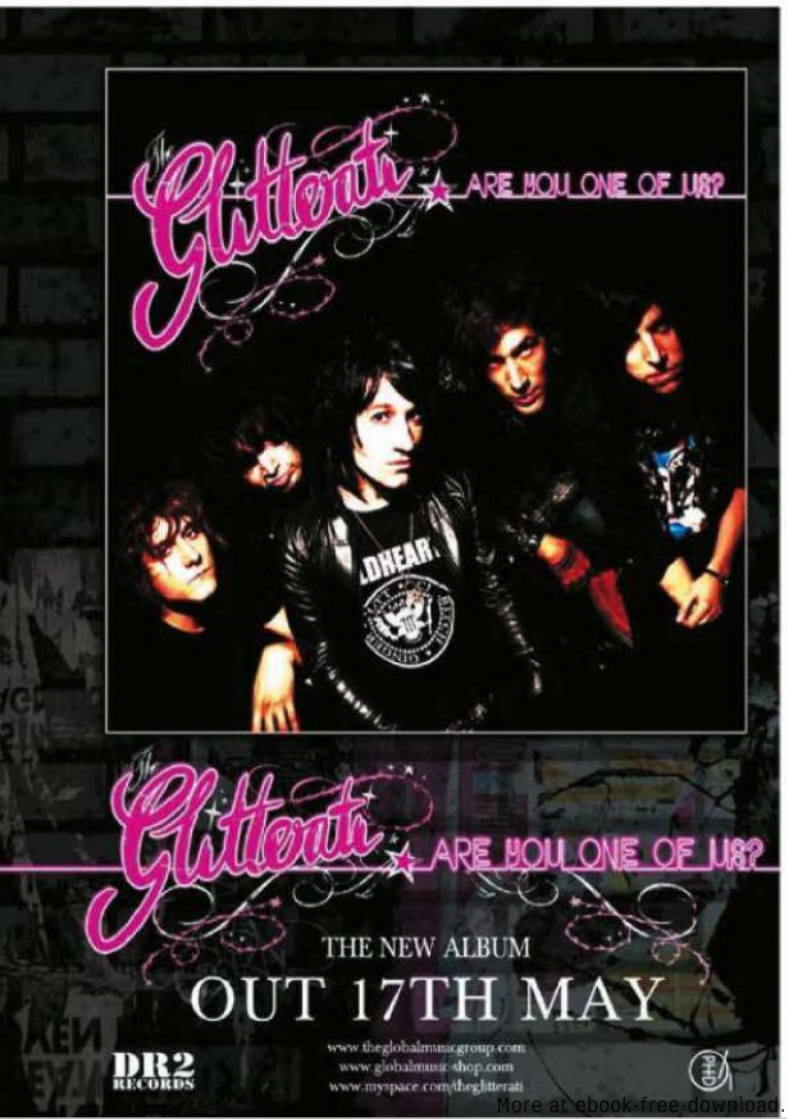

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five other Hammer-approved thrash essentials.

DEATH ANGEL

The Ultra-Violence, 1987

Their drummer Andy Galeon may only have been 13, but San Fran's Death Angel could sure lay down the thrash. The fact that Metallica's Kirk Hammett produced their *Kill As One* demo – also a frankly gobsmacking inclusion here – speaks volumes.

DARK ANGEL

Darkness Descends, 1986

Overshadowed by the Bay Area thrash heavyweights, LA's Dark Angel produced three monstrous albums. *Darkness Descends* is utterly compelling, frenzied and evil to the core.

ANNIHILATOR

Alice In Hell, 1989

Canadian thrash metal is the best music ever, as we all know, and the Great White North hit an early peak in thrash terms with this masterpiece from the ludicrously talented shredder Jeff Waters. Twenty years later, Annihilator are still a mighty force. Buy it.

SABBAT

History Of A Time To Come, 1988

British thrash was crap apart from Sabbat and Onslaught, and of those the former had the longer reign, combining semi-progressive songwriting with merciless riffage thanks to vocalist Martin Walkyier and axeman Andy Sneap (now a much in-demand producer). Sabbat's debut still sounds gigantic.

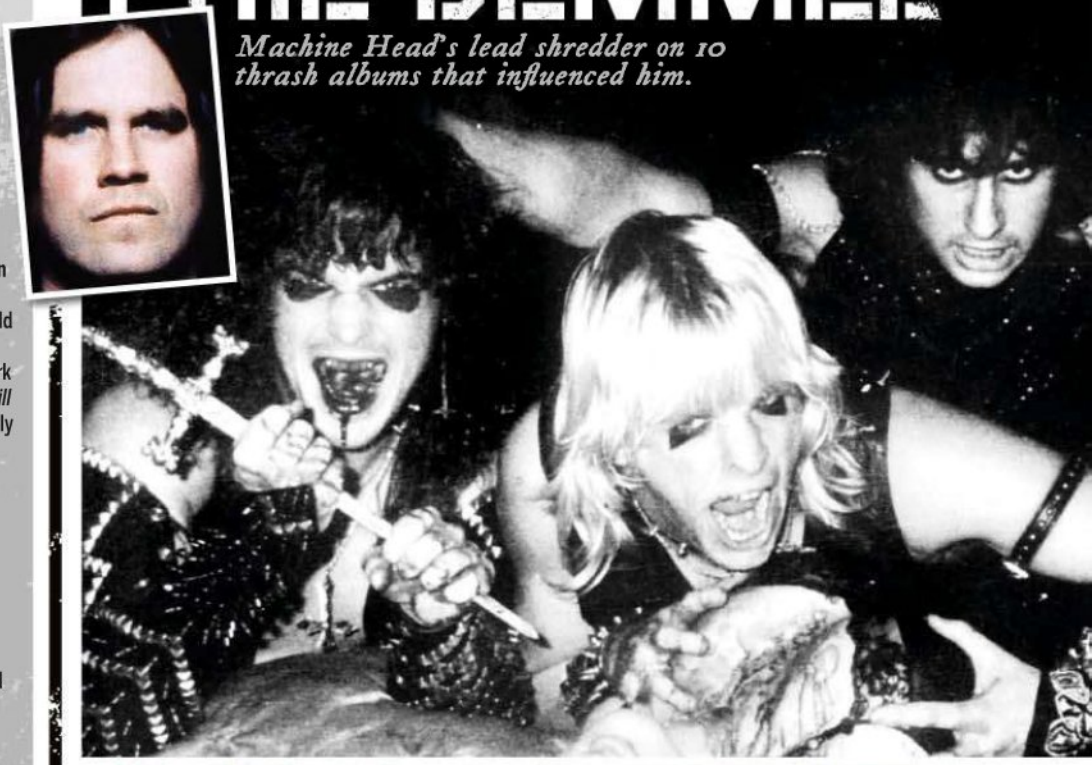
SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

How Will I Laugh Tomorrow When I Can't Even Smile Today, 1988

Once upon a time there was hardcore punk and there was thrash, and the twain never met until bands such as ST mixed 'em up. Suddenly crossover was the new thing, and they're still doing it now. Why? Because it's so maddeningly amazing.

PHIL DEMMEL

Machine Head's lead shredder on 10 thrash albums that influenced him.



"**SLAYER** are the main reason that I am playing heavy music, so it makes sense that I start with them and *Haunting The Chapel* [1984]. I witnessed their first show in northern California in 1983 at a time when I liked a lot of radio rock as well as thrash, bought the record a little later and decided to pick a certain path because of it. Songs like *Chemical Warfare* are positively ripping. They definitely planted the seeds for a lot of bands that came afterwards with that album, and it may sound strange but I think that the same can be said of *Morbid Tales* [1984] by **CELTIC FROST.** That was the record that introduced me to a slower but equally brutal kind of metal, and I think that the breakdowns and guttural vocals on that album played a big part in the evolution of a lot of bands who were focused solely on speed before then. Plus they were from Europe, which was really strange back then, and another European record that really deserves credit is **THE HAUNTED**'s *The Haunted* [1998]. *Hate Song* is one of the single best thrash songs ever written and from front to back it's a very powerful record. I was married for a while and music kind of took a back seat so I didn't hear it until 2002 even though it came out a few years before then, but when I heard it I felt as though I was a kid all over again. During my high school days I was really into *Heavy Metal Maniac* [1983] by **EXCITER.** That record is what I would call pre-thrash thrash, if that makes any sense at all! They had a lot of double bass in their songs and a real banshee of a singer who was also the drummer. When it comes to early, primitive thrash records they don't come much better or more influential than *Heavy Metal Maniac.* Much like The Haunted another relatively recent, European record that really grabbed me was *Inwards* [2002] by **DEW-SCENTED.** They're from Germany but they have a real Bay Area influence to them, which is probably why I dig them! They're super-fast and have some great vocals over the top of killer riffs. I'd even say that there are a couple of Slayer records where they should've sounded more like Dew-Scented! They're really unique, but one of the most groundbreaking and unexpected metal records I've ever heard was *Arise* [1991] by **SEPULTURA.** It was a real occasion when they came through the Bay Area because

GENRE DEFINING

Five albums that kickstarted thrash.

Metallica
MASTER OF PUPPETS, 1986

Even 24 years on, there is no denying the immense power of the songs that comprise Metallica's third album. How the hell did they do it? And why didn't they keep it up?

Megadeth
PEACE SELLS... BUT WHO'S BUYING?, 1986

Being massively pissed off obviously worked for Dave Mustaine's songcraft. Mildly irked with his ex-bandmates in Metallica, he wrote this early classic just to spite them.

Slayer
REIGN IN BLOOD, 1986

There is no more brutal way to spend 28 minutes than with Slayer's third album. Go on, play it loudly through headphones. It doesn't matter how many times you've heard it: you will still shit yourself.

Anthrax
AMONG THE LIVING, 1987

Some folk thought Anthrax were a joke because they wore shorts. Wrong. Their third LP combines blistering speed with songs about Judge Dredd and Indians – and utterly wins.

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Slayer: Phil's *Reigning* champs

they had quality songs and came from Brazil, which seemed ludicrous at the time. Everybody loved Iggor Cavalera because he was such a sick drummer, and overall you won't find many thrash albums in the same league as *Arise*. Another band that never gets enough credit in my book is **TESTAMENT**, especially with *The New Order* [1988]. They spent years knocking on the door of the big four and were unfortunate to never break through to that level. I toured with them in 1988 when I was in Vio-Lence and they were on fire. Every song on that record is straight up amazing and Chuck Billy had the best thrash metal voice in the world – period. When it comes to classic 80s thrash I'd have to throw **SLAYER** into the mix again with *Reign In Blood* [1986]. I was already firmly entrenched in thrash and Slayer themselves by the time it came out, but when it dropped it was the most brutal record ever. I loved the two albums that they made before it but the intensity and the ferociousness of *Reign In Blood* is something that you'll never be able to match. **METALLICA** also deserve a special mention, so I'm going to pick *Ride The Lightning* [1984]. In Machine Head we have this *Ride The Lightning* versus *Master Of Puppets* debate all the time, but for me the raw production and the thrashier elements of the songs makes it stand out. Songs like *Fight Fire With Fire* and *Trapped Under Ice* are classic thrash songs and overall it still maintained a heavy punk influence, which was a big part of the genre. It's one of the best examples of thrash ever recorded, but my number one choice is *Bonded By Blood* [1985] by **EXODUS**. That record simply captured the whole essence of what thrash was to me as a kid. They had the jean vests and the white sneakers, but the anger and frustration was there for all to hear in the music. They made violence fun in all the right ways, and for me *Bonded By Blood* is by far the best example of thrash at its absolute peak."

Kreator
PLEASURE TO KILL, 1986

Thrash wasn't all about Americans with skinny jeans. It was also about Germans with skinny jeans. *Pleasure...* sounded as though Kreator had grown up in a grim industrial hell – because they had.

Trent Reznor: machine moshable material

NICK HUTSON/REDFERNS/GETTY

INDUSTRIAL

Hammer selects the machine-powered essentials.

RAMMSTEIN
Sehnsucht, 1997

Despite being entirely sung in German, Rammstein's second album brought them success all over the world. In truth, it's not hard to see why. The riffs are massive, the tunes are instantly memorable. Hugeness soon followed.

NINE INCH NAILS
The Downward Spiral, 1994

Having conquered the world with his *Pretty Hate Machine* debut, Trent Reznor's genius was laid bare on the follow-up, an astonishingly deep, dense and complex concept record that would strike a chord with gloomy bastards everywhere.

MINISTRY
Psalm 69, 1992

Despite origins as a synth-pop band, Ministry took to metal like drug-munching ducks to polluted water. *Psalm 69* was all about heavy metal riffs, with plenty of thunderous, programmed drums and barking mad slogans thrown in for good measure.

GODFLESH
Streetcleaner, 1989

A stripped-down but destructive beast, the second album from these British industrialists bombarded stunned listeners with giant, grinding riffs, howling feedback and bleak, inhuman vocals, inspiring Machine Head and Fear Factory in the process.

SCRAPING FOETUS OFF THE WHEEL
Hole, 1984

An obvious inspiration to both Trent Reznor and Ministry's Al Jourgensen, Jim 'Foetus' Thirlwell has been making uniquely twisted and imaginative records like this wild, industrial masterpiece for 30 years now. Dark, deranged and compelling, *Hole* was a new kind of futuristic musical Hell.

SKINNY PUPPY
Too Dark Park, 1990

A landmark in the chain that led to NIN and Ministry, Skinny Puppy remain one of industrial rock's most revered bands. This stunning paean to urban decay and mortal horror still sounds like nothing on Earth.

LAIBACH
Opus Dei, 1987

Before Rammstein, there was Laibach. Mischievously flirting with totalitarian imagery and revelling in the Wagnerian pomp of their militaristic, bombastic sound, these crafty Slovenians were both industrial pioneers and dedicated masters of musical subversion.

DIE KRUPPS
Tribute To Metallica EP, 1992

Despite making numerous important albums during their formative years, it was this clanking and peculiar tribute to the thrash metal legends that secured Die Krupps as crossover artistes *par excellence*, blurring the lines between industrial rock and metal like never before and uniting the tribes along the way.

FRONTLINE ASSEMBLY
Millennium, 1994

Led by studio scientists Bill Leeb and Rhys Fulber (also a known associate of Fear Factory), these adventurous Canadians covered much ground during their existence, but this storming blend of beats, bleeps, movie samples and crunching guitars was their most powerfully metal-friendly moment.

KMFDM
Naïve, 1990

Closer to the original sound of industrial rock than their more metallic peers, KMFDM always knew how to kick arse too, even when dabbling with sequenced beats and psychedelic ambience. Rammstein are huge fans of the band, and this album noisily explains why.

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CRITICS' CHOICE

Five albums that have broken the mould.

STRAPPING YOUNG LAD

City, 1997

Taking Fear Factory's cyber-thrash blueprint and cranking everything up several notches. This remains the Canadians' most earth-shattering achievement to date.

DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN

Calculating Infinity, 1999

An album with WTF? written all over it, DEP's debut was a mathematically bewildering, avant-garde, face-melting explosion of creativity and intensity – expanding the boundaries of metal.

LAMB OF GOD

Ashes Of The Wake, 2004

Widely hailed as 'the new Pantera', Virginia's finest came into their own on their third album, as the riff-count grew and the hooks got bigger. With anthems like *Now You've Got Something To Die For*, their status as the kings of the new metal breed was never in doubt after this monster.

GOJIRA

From Mars To Sirius, 2005

Utterly inspired and utterly unexpected, Gojira put France's overlooked heavy music scene on the map once and for all with this heroically original album that threw together death metal, Meshuggah-style polyrhythms and the widescreen grandeur of Devin Townsend's sterling production work.

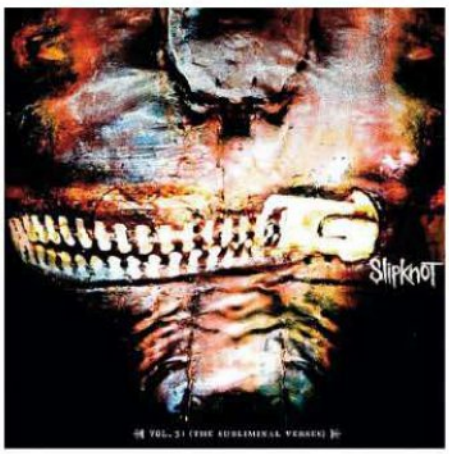
SOILWORK

Natural Born Chaos, 2002

Bred within the ever-fruitful Swedish melodic death metal scene, Soilwork are devout futurists and this collaboration with producer Devin Townsend sealed their reputation as riffmasters glued to the cutting edge. Unmissable.

ZOLTAN BATHORY

Five Finger Death Punch's guitarist picks 10 modern metal masterpieces.



If you're talking about modern metal then Vulgar *Display Of Power* [1992] by **PANTERA** is definitely the number one. I was not a big fan of the hair metal stuff that was coming out of LA at the end of the 80s. The only band I liked from that era was WASP, you know? I wasn't into the grunge scene either, Nirvana and all those bands. *Vulgar Display...* was a light at the end of the tunnel. It was an inspiration to me and it blew my fuckin' pants off. Watching Dimebag Darrell play, I felt like I was going to give up playing the guitar, you know? I had to go home, lick my wounds and stitch up the new arsehole that this guy just tore me! Ha ha! I went back to the drawing board and started all over. And you can't deny *The Black Album* [1991] by **METALLICA**, right? It put metal into a glass box. You'll never get a better-sounding record. That was a moment when a band did all the right things and it was absolute perfection. Musically, I preferred *Master Of Puppets* [1986], but *The Black Album* is a monument. It's the cross on the grave of traditional metal. There was nowhere left to go after that. It was an honourable burial for traditional heavy metal! After that, ironically, **IN FLAMES** were the keepers of the flame! The dark days of grunge were sweeping across the globe, but these guys were churning out stainless Swedish steel, keeping it all alive. Nobody ever waves the flag for those guys. *Whoracle* [1997] and *Clayman* [2000] were two records I destroyed several neighbours of mine with! **KILLSWITCH ENGAGE** are one of my favourite bands of all time. They are a very important bridge between melodic death metal and all the metalcore bands. They have this balance between melody and aggression, and without bands like Killswitch, Five Finger Death Punch wouldn't exist or we would be a very different band. *The End Of Heartache* [2004] is one of my all-time favourite records. I've got several speeding tickets while listening to it! **DEMON HUNTER** are another amazing band. I absolutely love the melodies they come up with. *Summer Of Darkness* [2004] is another favourite record of mine. They're not as important as Killswitch, but they're still a solid brick of gold in the plethora of metal bands that are out there right now. I also absolutely love *Sehnsucht* [1997] by **RAMMSTEIN**. It brought a new hope

GENRE DEFINING

After grunge killed metal, these bands revived it.

Avenged Sevenfold
CITY OF EVIL, 2005

The eyeliner-wearing badboys of OC hardcore turned in a career-defining album of sleazy metallic hard rock that put them on the world stage. This was *Appetite For Destruction* for the new generation.

Sepultura
CHAOS AD, 1993

Already revered among thrash and death metal fans for their primitive early releases, the boys from Brazil were firmly at the cutting edge of metal on this collection of razor-sharp riffs and crushing brutality.

Machine Head
BURN MY EYES, 1994

A near-perfect debut album that smashed all opposition with an arsenal of devastating riffs that took the essence of thrash into a brave new world, the first Machine Head album simply ruled. And it still does.

Fear Factory
DEMANUFACTURE, 1995

So far ahead of its time that bands are still failing to rip it off convincingly today, Fear Factory's ultra-precise extreme metal attack and pioneering harsh-to-clean vocal approach dragged metal into the future.

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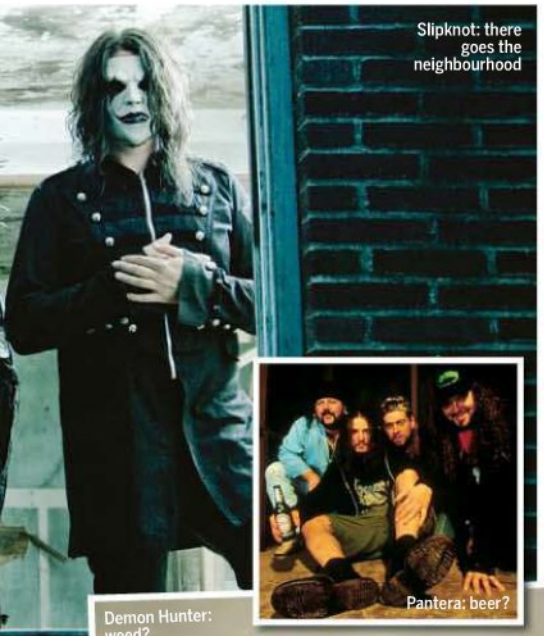

Slipknot: there goes the neighbourhood

Pantera: beer?

Demon Hunter: weed?

for arena metal, if there's still such a thing! I guess they did eventually become an arena band, at least in Europe. I love **SLIPKNOT** and particularly the third album, *Vol. 3: (The Subliminal Verses)* [2004], Slipknot were the band that connected this new kind of metal with the metal I loved. **KORN** really started that whole thing, and their first record, *Korn* [1994] is killer, but *Vol. 3* is a perfect record. **DISTURBED** is another band that catches a lot of shit because they came out of that whole nu metal era, but the interesting thing is that they have a great fucking singer in David Draiman! Dan Donegan is a great guitar player too, and he comes up with some really interesting riffs. They sell millions of records for a reason, you know? At a time when most frontmen just scream, David can really fucking sing and their records are getting better and better and maybe even *purer* as they go along. *Indestructible* [2008] was a great album. Another band that is very important today is **DRAGONFORCE**. A lot of people see them as a novelty, but those guys can really, really shred! They're top of the line, hot shot players, and I would say that Herman Li is probably the best guitarist that this generation has produced. Just listen to *Inhuman Rampage* [2006], man. Herman is playing an important role in metal, just like Yngwie J Malmsteen did before. Those guys don't take themselves seriously and I like them a lot. People don't walk up to you and say, 'Secretly, I'm a Viking warrior!' No one's going to do that. Dragonforce are funny guys and they made it OK to play that kind of stuff and really have fun with it."

Fear Factory's Burton C Bell: without Replica

Slipknot
SLIPKNOT, 1999

For those who thought that Korn and Deftones were lacking in aggression, Slipknot's debut proper was exactly what the nu metal doctor ordered. Savage, chaotic and as catchy now as they ever were.

Metallica: the four horsemen

DARREN KEITH CHAMBERS

KILLSWITCH ENGAGE

Adam D picks the discs that defined the 90s and beyond.

METALLICA
Ride The Lightning, 1984

"I'm a guitar player, so riffs might come up quite a lot, but the riffs on this record were just monumental. Metallica were pretty much the band that taught me how to play guitar. This album has the songwriting, the attitude and intricate riffs."

METALLICA
Master Of Puppets, 1986

"The development from *Ride...* to *Master...* was massive: They still had the aggression but they were more mature. It was smarter: the leads were a little smarter, the songs were a little smarter. I don't play it that often, but you always hear them wherever you go."

SLAYER
Reign In Blood, 1986

"This record has it all: the aggression, the guitar riffs, the attitude. If you look at the sound of the record it's very thin, you can hear the instruments being played, the drums aren't sound-replaced, you're hearing the playing – and you don't hear metal records like that anymore. It's unique."

PANTERA
Vulgar Display Of Power, 1992

"It's a record that when you hear, you know that it's Dime – it's his riffs and his tone. It's every guitarist's dream to be distinguishable from one chord. How many bands would cite that band and that record as an influence? They changed the face of metal."

CANNIBAL CORPSE
The Bleeding, 1994

"The first time I heard this record I was like, 'This band write *insane* riffs!' It's absolutely incredible death metal. It's untouchable. This one was the first record of theirs that hit me, when I realised they were really special. Everything was so tappy and so heavy and so grindy – it's really cool."

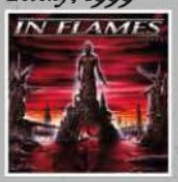
DEICIDE
Once Upon The Cross, 1995

"The most evil and satanic metal record ever made with the sickest of riffs and licks. I love the sound, it's so empty and scooped and metal sounding – it's very, very heavy. If you're really personally anti-God and anti-religion then you're stoked for this record."

CARCASS
Heartwork, 1993

"Their sound and their songwriting really changed things. They had the death metal elements, it was grinding and they threw it all together with these Iron Maiden-y riffs and it worked and made something really awesome – it totally changed the world of metal for me."

IN FLAMES
Colony, 1999



"This record is such a great combination of so many elements and metal sounds for me: the songwriting, the riffs, the harmonised leads. It was a big part of Killswitch Engage. It was like Maiden without the singing, with heavy breakdowns... on steroids."

AT THE GATES
Slaughter Of The Soul, 1995

"The songs sound great: it's the melodic riffs and the pure speed. You can hear their influence in so many of the bands that followed them: from melodic death metal to metalcore and so on. And there's a reason... because it's awesome!"

MESHUGGAH
Destroy Erase Improve, 1995

"There are so many musicians that want that technical aspect of Meshuggah for their own band. I hadn't really thought about drums like that until I heard this record – that record changed the way I played drums. The thing with the drummer is that it's completely chaotic but you can still groove to it."

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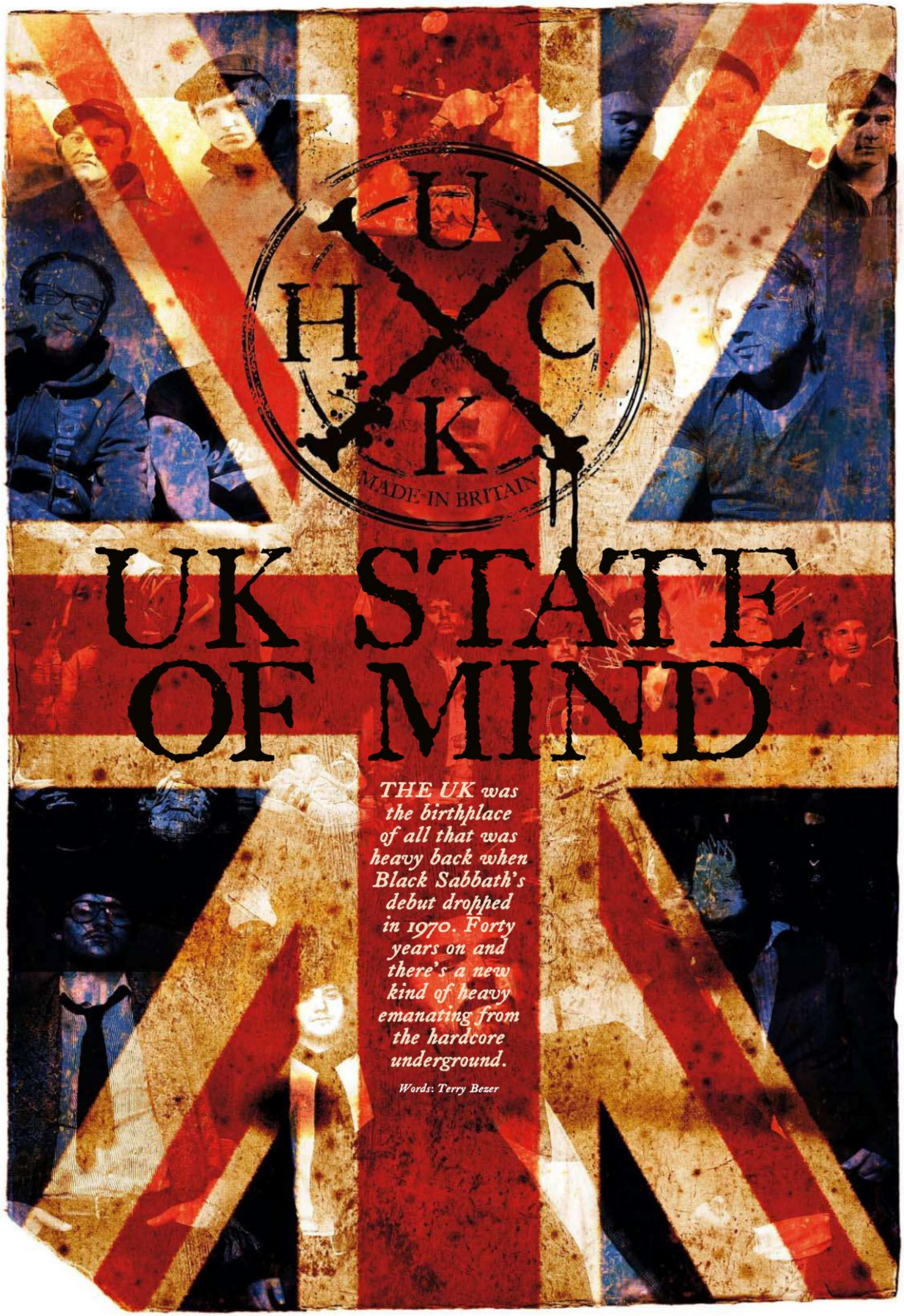

UK STATE OF MIND

THE UK was the birthplace of all that was heavy back when Black Sabbath's debut dropped in 1970. Forty years on and there's a new kind of heavy emanating from the hardcore underground.

Words: Terry Bezer

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"Why not be proud of where you're from and who you are instead of trying to be fucking American?"

JAMES COLLEY, FEED THE RHINO

The 90s and early part of the 00s were a desolate wasteland for British rock music in terms of quality and commercial success, both at home and abroad. Whether it was nu metal, screamo or metalcore, there was no disputing that the US were calling all the shots with what was going on in the world of rock music and, while that is unlikely to ever change, what was beginning to set alarm bells ringing was that UK bands would only get the slightest whiff of success if they sounded like they hailed from the home of the hamburger. From the varsity rock leanings of Hundred Reasons and Hell Is For Heroes to the bombastic, arena-hugging sound of Bullet For My Valentine's *The Poison*, it seemed written in blood that the only way a British band could get any level of success was to sound like their Stateside counterparts. Thankfully, in 2006, that landscape was knocked flat on its arse forever.

Regardless of your view on Gallows, their *Orchestra Of Wolves* album resonated with fans, critics and bands alike with all the force of a titanium baseball bat swung into the centre of your nose. If this has come across as being confrontational towards the US thus far, that's not the intention of this piece at all. The core sound of that landmark album owed more to the US punk movement that spewed out Minor Threat and Black Flag than anything that happened in the UK in 1977, but its essence was more quintessentially British than any rock band that had infiltrated the hearts and minds of UK fans and rock media alike, since that golden age of punk rock and the NWOBHM movement. They looked like the same kids you saw when you looked out of your living room window, they used words like 'prick' and sung about how people wanted to 'kick their fucking head in'. This is England? You fucking bet it is.

"I was always frustrated when you'd hear British bands trying to sound American," says James Colley, guitarist with rising Kent hardcore brigade Feed The Rhino, whose debut, *Mr Red Eye*, is out via In At The Deep End in June. "Why not be proud of where you're from and who you are instead of trying to be fucking American? I'm glad that way of thinking came to an end."

As a direct result of this adrenaline shot into the arm of the British public's consciousness, the real influence of *Orchestra Of Wolves* was starting to be seen and heard on bands up and down the country. Bands like thrashy hardcore mob One Step Down began to bear 'Bury St. Edmonds Hardcore' on the front of their MySpace like a banner being waved into battle, and bands have started to reference things that are happening on their own front doorstep in an accent that doesn't resemble something that's been lifted straight off of the silver screen.

"Gallows deserve a lot of credit for making it alright to be British again," says Stuart Paice, guitarist with British hardcore crew Your Demise. "Whatever people think of that album, they put people's eyes back onto the UK scene."

"Bands in this country saw a band step up and they thought that they could achieve something and they pushed themselves harder," agrees FTR's James. "I think that's one of the reasons we've got loads of good bands in Britain now."

"I think it's really helped having bands like Gallows and Bring Me The Horizon breaking through," says Charlie Wilson, guitarist with London's TRC, whose EP, *The Revolution Continues*, is out now via Thirty Days Of Night. "I think it's helped kids who would only really find out about bands through music magazines realise that there are great bands and music on their doorstep and not just across the ocean."

While Gallows undoubtedly booted the door open for the British hardcore scene, nobody could have predicted the level of high-quality acts it would produce and the diversity that would soon exist throughout it within the space of four short years. In 2010, the UK hardcore scene has plenty of bands willing to push hardcore in new and exciting directions. London's TRC have blended nose-breaking beatdowns with unmistakably British MCing to create one of the freshest sounds in rock music today, whilst Your Demise are unafraid to drop a five-minute dub-step track into the middle of their latest, pit-igniting album, *Ignorance Never Dies* (out now via Visible Noise).

"We're open-minded about things," says Your Demise frontman, Ed McRae. "We play Lil' Wayne as our intro tape when we play live because we thought that if we heard a band use it, it'd get us in the mood to have a good time. We're always going to be true to our roots but I think the days of following a rulebook are numbered."

"Back in the day, hardcore was pretty much just hardcore," says One Step Down guitarist Sean Griffin. "All of the bands kind of sounded the same, but now there's a new breed of hardcore which some of the oldies might disagree with. I like how hardcore has been blended in with metal or punk and even pop! It makes things a little more interesting, just like shots at the bar!"

Whilst it's exciting that bands are setting fire to the standard rules and regulations that make scenes become staler than a month-old loaf of bread that you could launch through someone's window, there are those who are continuing the trad-hardcore legacy of fallen British hardcore luminaries Stampin' Ground and Knuckledust. Medway's Pay No Respect (whose self-released *Fear Profits Man Nothing* is out now) and fellow southerners Breaking Point excel in the field of meat-and-potatoes hardcore, while Hang The Bastard, Jealous and impressive Margate newcomers Alaska are as densely powerful as the likes of Converge and Trap Them.

The most significant feeling amongst UK bands in 2010 seems to be that there is no limit to what they can achieve. Whether it's Gallows being signed to a major label or a band as schizophrenically confrontational as Rolo Tomassi being taken out to play in front of thousands of people every night by chart-botherers Biffy Clyro, the door is undeniably being smashed open

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for young, British bands to step up and make a name for themselves on the grandest of stages.

"It's not just here that people are starting to take notice," says Your Demise's Ed McRae. "Dead Swans (full-on hardcore from Swansea) have been signed to Bridge 9 in America and that's made people over there sit up and take a look at what's going on in the UK and we've always got great reactions when people talk to us from America."

"Bring Me The Horizon can play to over 4,000 people in Mexico and even American bands can't manage that," nods Your Demise's Stuart Paice, whose band will spend their summer supporting US big-hitters Unearth and The Devil Wears Prada across the States. "It's testament to the scene that people are looking at Britain as a talented place right now. If we didn't have the bands to back it up then people wouldn't care."

Perhaps the most exciting thing about the UK scene is that it shows absolutely no sign of slowing down. This year will see the release of Feed The Rhino's debut album. It's an album of stunning quality that combines the relentless bludgeoning feeling of prime-time Helmet, the fearless rock'n'roll experimentalism of Every Time I Die and the suburban British grit of Gallows. Lower Than Atlantis have already dropped *Far Q* (via Wolf At Your Door), an album that names and shames *The Daily Mail* while giving Quicksand's classic *Slip* a genuine run for its money. Add to this the unique avant garde flavour of Rolo Tomassi's latest and greatest album, *Cosmology*, and that there are more exciting releases to come in 2010 from rising upstarts Heart In Hand, Run, Pay No Respect and Take Courage and it's undeniable that this scene continues to pick up momentum at a teeth-chattering pace.

"Being honest and true to yourselves is one of the most important things that a band should do and people are thankfully starting to realise that," says Feed the Rhino's James Colley. "We can be ourselves and be British and still have a voice in heavy music. People are catching on all over the place and that's down to the amount of good bands that are coming up in Britain."

"It's now become too hard for people not to notice our hardcore scene," says Alaska's Ben Asherman (whose *MMX* EP is out now via Fist In The Air). "Bands from way up north are representing bands way down south by wearing their t-shirts, releasing split records and touring together and, because of this, the hardcore scene is only getting stronger."

"Look at the facts: we've brought the world Black Sabbath, Iron Maiden, The Beatles, Rolling Stones, The Clash... the list is endless," says TRC's Charlie Wilson. "It is great to open up a music magazine and see a picture of a UK band doing really well for themselves, rather than the latest import, and I think a lot of people feel the same."

For the first time in decades, Britain has something to scream about. A crop of boner-extending bands have risen, that genuinely have the ability to capture the hearts and minds of rock and metal fans around the world. This scene doesn't just deserve your attention – it fucking demands it.

"It is great to open up a music magazine and see a picture of a UK band doing really well for themselves"

CHARLIE WILSON, TRC

Sounds of the Underground

15 BANDS REPRESENTING THE NEW WAVE OF UK HARDCORE.

Your Demise
Spine-snapping modern hardcore with nods to dub-step. Keep your eyes on these boys. Shit's about to get real.
www.myspace.com/yourdemise

Feed The Rhino
The future sound of punk'n'roll. Like early Helmet being buggered senseless by Every Time I Die.
www.myspace.com/feedtherhinomusic

TRC
British MCing meets roof-raising beatdowns to create one of the freshest sounds around. Anybody can beatdown but these guys are the most original kids on the block.
www.myspace.com/trchardcore

Pay No Respect
Like a Hulked-up, heavier Hatebreed. Pure brutal British hardcore.
www.myspace.com/paynorespect

Alaska
Forward-thinking hardcore that manages to be experimental, unpredictable and savage.
www.myspace.com/thealaskankings

Lower Than Atlantis
Slick and hooky melodic hardcore that sounds like Jetplane Landing on steroids. Cooler than an ice-cube out of a polar bear's arse crack.
www.myspace.com/lowerthanatlantis

Blackhole
Fist-throwing, no-nonsense, rocket-fuelled hardcore with a chiv-sharp rock'n'roll edge.
www.myspace.com/blackhole

Dead Swans
Full-on savage hardcore from Swansea. Breakneck speed and inventive breaks. The first British band to sign to influential US hardcore label, Bridge 9.
www.myspace.com/thedeadswans

Heart In Hand
From the school of Bring Me The Horizon, metal shafts hardcore hooks to create this baby.
www.myspace.com/heartinhandband

One Step Down
Call-to-arms, mosh-ready HC that's ready to slap the teeth out of your face.
www.myspace.com/osdbsehc

Breaking Point
True hardcore, with no added influences from other genres and zero added sugar.
www.myspace.com/thenotoriousbxp

Hang The Bastard
Like death metal having savage winky time with hardcore.
www.myspace.com/hangthebastardlondon

Take Courage
One of the most potentially awesome bands from this scene. A band in their infancy that threaten to do great things. Watch this space.
www.myspace.com/takecourageuk

Jealous
For those who like their hardcore dense, dark and sinister. Like Converge with a knife held to their throat.
www.myspace.com/lessonlearnt

Run!
Swagger and sass, as well as blood-spitting energy. Another band for the 'ones to watch' pile.
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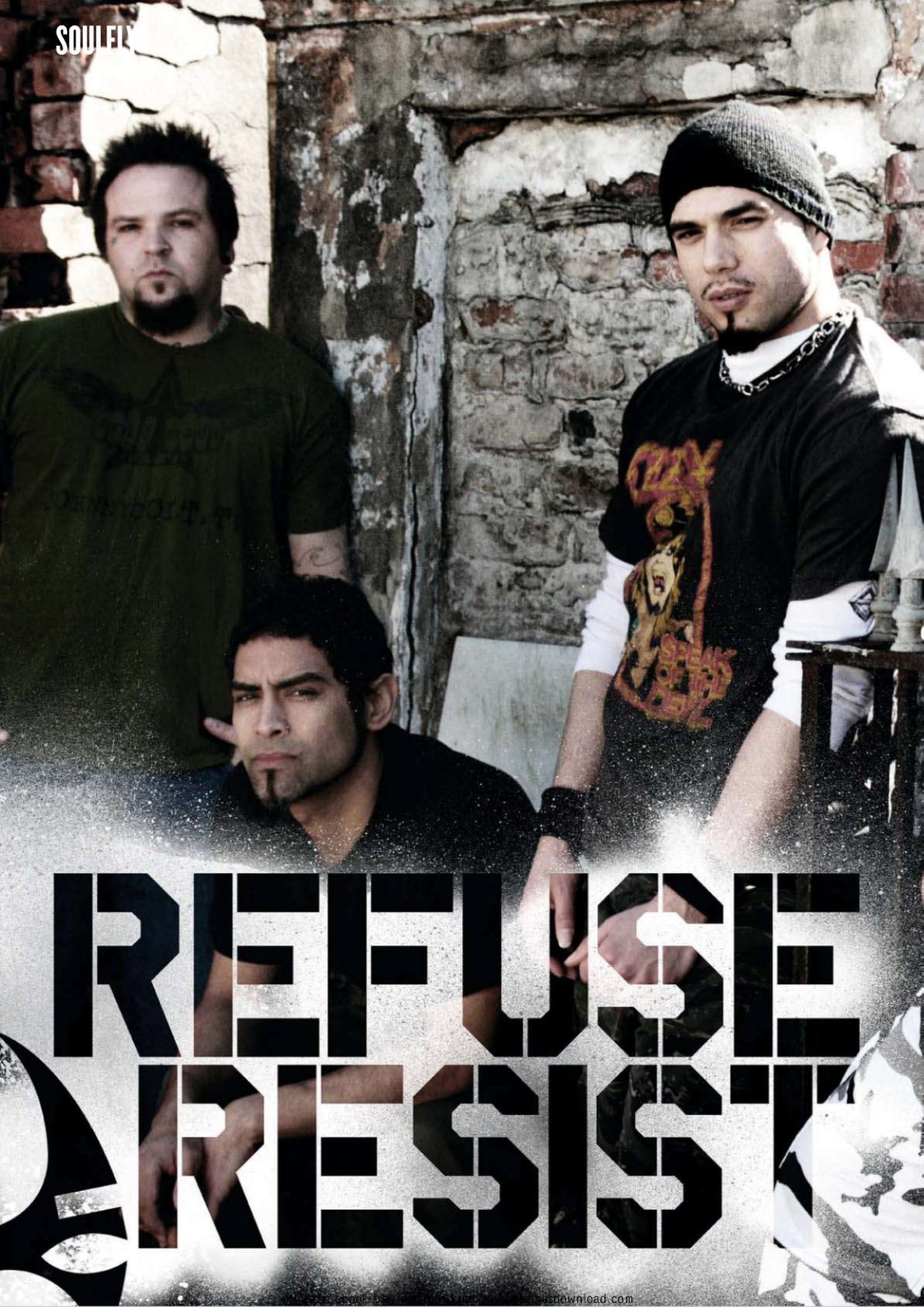
SOULFLY
OZZY
REFUSE
RESIST

SOULFLY frontman Max Cavalera has taken enough knocks to put Ricky Hatton down. But you can't keep a good man down and now at 40, he's hitting back harder than ever.

Words: John Doran.

"I'M GETTING OLDER, SO WHAT? I SHOULD STOP OR PLAY SLOW? THAT'S FUCKING BULLSHIT"

MAX CAVALERA

It's human nature to look for clues amongst the wreckage. Even for the most atheistic amongst us, there is a hardwired tendency to see significance in the most random aspects of our lives. It is one of the few things that separates us from the animals; a need to impose order upon chaos. It is the evolutionary tool that has seen us 'progress' from sky-fearing monkey men into rapacious, planet destroying homosapiens. This is why, when after we dream – essentially a series of random thoughts, images and sensations flying through our subconscious – and wake up, our brains rearrange this mosaic of psychedelic nonsense into a coherent plot.

Brazilian thrash metal hero Max Cavalera of Soulfly says that the idea for the artwork of *Omen*, Soulfly's seventh album, featuring a sinister-looking cabal of kids in gasmasks, came to him as a nocturnal revelation.

"I dreamt the artwork. It has really creepy, gasmask-wearing figures, each one holding something different... like a flaming skull or a pig..."

Metal artwork has a special significance that it does not have in other genres. If you look at the artwork to any indie album, what do you see? Four guys who look like Harry Potter in duffle coats, sitting in a café. If you look at the artwork to any R&B album, what do you see? Some dude with no belt who owes H Samuel a lot of money stood next to his jeep. Metal, however, is rich in symbolism drawn from world religion, science, history, the occult, politics and horror. The sleeve to your average metal album begs to be interpreted into an understandable narrative. The cover art to *Reign In Blood* puts a gun to your head and fucking demands it.

And when you know Max's history, which has been chequered with tragedy and ill-fortune, one cannot help but look for the deeper story in his band's visual identity. As we know, Max rose to fame as the frontman of Sepultura before splitting from the group – and for many years resisting contact with his brother, Seps drummer Iggor – after the tragic death of his stepson Dana Wells, and the release of seminal 'world thrash' album *Roots*. As he explains to *Metal Hammer*, he came pretty close to giving up at this point.

"During the split from Sepultura up until when I wrote *Soulfly* I just didn't want to do it anymore. I took some time off but then this urge came over me and when I looked in the mirror it was like, 'I'm still here. I'm still alive. I can still do this.'"

His new group helped Max to explore his burgeoning interest in combining world tribal music with extreme metal, but then disaster struck again in December 2004. Within two days of each other his eight-month-old grandson Moses and his old drinking buddy Dimebag died. His band entered their '*Dark Ages*'; the spirituality and musical experimentation began to wither on the vine.

Six years later, however, and Soulfly are back with their seventh album on Roadrunner, the fabulously stripped-down and furious *Omen*. And things, thankfully, appear to be mending. Perhaps it is important that Soulfly have recorded a seventh album, beating the six he recorded with Sepultura. And when you add that to the title and the album artwork that features ghostly-looking kids wearing gasmasks and bearing arcane gifts, it raises questions. Is he a superstitious man?

Max Cavalera, a very friendly and funny bloke, whose chilled South American-accented English makes him sound uncannily like Cheech Marin from the Cheech and Chong films, laughs and shakes his head.

"The children each represent one of the seven deadly sins. That's kind of the vibe we went for. Seven albums, seven sins, y'know?"

He is quick to point out, as a well-known believer in God but harsh critic of organised religion, that this doesn't mean he's going to Sunday school or anything.

"I think the seven deadly sins were invented by the church. They weren't invented by God so I don't give them too much credence."

Many people will be pleased to know that *Omen* is the most straightforwardly brutal thrash/classic metal album he has been involved with for a while. And while the lyrical concerns are pretty gnarly (the death penalty, mass slaughter, Jeffrey Dahmer and world financial collapse), this is, of course totally positive in metal terms. Madness, mayhem and murder are staples of our cult and in this case reflect a newly invigorated joy at being in Soulfly, rather than a reflection of painful mourning and depressing times.

The album title came about in a random way that took him back some years as well.

"The title of the album came from a bit of spraypainting I saw on a wall when we were over in London. I thought, 'That's a great name for an album.' That's how I got the name *Refuse/Resist*. I was in a subway in New York and I saw a black guy – he looked like a Black Panther [radical Afro American direct action group] – and he was wearing a jacket that had *Refuse/Resist* written on the back. It stuck with me."

Times are obviously happier as he is finding it easier to concentrate on the positive instead of the negative. When asked about his relationship with Dimebag, he recalls a happy few months he spent on tour in 1994 with Sepultura, Pantera and Prong.

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"I still don't know how nobody died from alcohol poisoning!" he laughs heartily. "Dimebag would always have a full bar going during the Pantera set. I always tell people that he actually had a bartender and not a roadie because most of the time this dude would just be on stage fixing people drinks. Occasionally he would give Dimebag a guitar so he could play the set but for the other 90 per cent of the time he would be mixing cocktails and handing them out! I don't know how we didn't all end up in hospital after that tour; it was crazy! It was really, really fun. That was the tour where Brazil won the World Cup and after the final we took the tour bus to the stadium in California. And opening for Pantera at that show it just erupted into a half-hour drum set during the Sepultura set. I think we only played two songs and the rest was just a big drum session with flags and celebration and shit like that. All of Pantera were wearing Brazilian football tops and flags... it was really, really cool."

This idea of heavy metal being one big family, a tribe of likeminded individuals, is obviously very close to his heart. Prong have recently just toured with Soulfly and Tommy Victor, their godlike rhythm guitarist frontman, adds a scorching vocal presence to *Omen* track *Lethal Injection*.

"Tommy is a great guy and a great guitar player. He is solid... simply amazing live. On tour I used to come down to watch them live and just be amazed at how solid he plays that shit live. We wrote the lyrics to *Lethal Injection* together. It's about capital punishment, and lethal injection is the most widely used means of killing death row people in the States. I think it's absurd the number of people they have on death row. It's a really huge number and a lot of those cases, it turns out that the guy was innocent... after they've killed him. That is the system failing right there."

As for the increased brutality of the sound, Max is combative.

"The spirituality stuff I'm taking a break from as well. I'm showing a different side. A heavier, more aggressive side. I don't want to stop. Just because I'm getting older, what? I should stop or play slow? That's fucking bullshit. It's absolute bullshit. I don't have to.

"The great thing about music and why I am making them heavier and more aggressive is that it is in direct relation to the crowd, not myself. Seeing that chaos of the crowd in front of me, that utter rebelliousness is what I love."

And undoubtedly, adding immensely to this new feeling of positivity is the continuation and success of his side-project with his brother Iggor: "Right now it feels like Soulfly is my mission but I do have Cavalera Conspiracy on the side. We're going into the studio next week to work on the next album. My creative mood is really good right now with all these projects going on but I feel that Soulfly and Cavalera Conspiracy are the projects with which I'm gonna be busy for the rest of my life."

So no goat entrails need to be strewn across the floor, no arcane spells need to be cast and no clues interpreted to see that Max Cavalera's future is once again bright.

***OMEN* IS OUT MAY 24 VIA ROADRUNNER**

"SOULFLY AND CAVALERA CONSPIRACY ARE THE PROJECTS WITH WHICH I'LL BE BUSY FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE"
MAX CAVALERA

Soulfly (left to right): Marc Rizzo, Max Cavalera, Joe Nunez, Bobby Burns

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GREG PUCIATO (THE DILLINGER ESCAPE PLAN)

***RISE OF THE FALLEN* FROM *OMEN*, 2010**

"Greg is one of the most exciting people I've worked with in a long time. He was so full of adrenaline. I met him at a benefit we were doing for Chi (Deftones). I invited him to be on the next record. He said yes and told me he'd grown up on Sepultura. He really delivered."

SEAN LENNON

***SON SONG* FROM *PRIMITIVE*, 2000**

"The engineer in the studio was a Beatles obsessive and we had to control him because we thought he was going to have a heart attack when he met John Lennon's son! Afterwards we went to see Kiss. Paul Stanley came straight off stage, with his make-up still on, to meet him! It was surreal seeing them together."

PROFESSOR LJUBOMIR DIMITRIJEVIC

***BORN AGAIN ANARCHIST* FROM *PROPHECY*, 2004**

"The wildest guest ever was a Professor of Ancient Music from the University of Belgrade. He was this guy in his 60s who showed up with a 1,000-year-old set of bagpipes. He was waving his hands around while listening to heavy metal and when he started playing we were like, 'Check this shit out!'"

TOMMY VICTOR (PRONG)

***LETHAL INJECTION* FROM *OMEN*, 2010**

"Tommy really is a great guy and a great guitar player. We wrote the lyrics to *Lethal Injection* together; the music was already done so he just came and did the lyrics and the vocals with me in the studio. It would have been pretty cool if he had written a riff... ha ha. I guess there's always next time, right?! Ha ha ha!"

ZYON AND IGOR CAVALERA

***REFUSE/RESIST* AND *YOUR LIFE, MY LIFE*, FROM *OMEN – DELUXE EDITION*, 2010**

"It was Zyon who picked *Refuse/Resist* to cover. We recorded his heartbeat and that is the sound that opened *Chaos AD* by Sepultura. So there is an emotional significance for me to have him play this. Igor picked Excel's *Your Life, My Life*. They both did great and I was a very proud dad."

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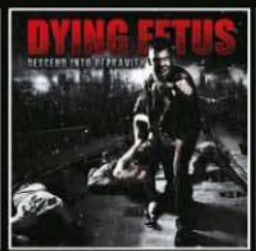

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HEADBANG

"WE'VE ALWAYS BEEN THE ENEMY OF METAL PURISTS"

BRANDAN SCHIEPPATI

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Bleeding Through (left to right): Derek Youngsma, Dave Nassie, Marta Peterson, Brandan Schieppati, Ryan Wombacher

ERS' BRAWL

BLEEDING THROUGH have faced some tough battles in recent years, losing several bandmembers along the way. But with their vicious metalcore/black metal fusion they're fighting back hard.

Words: Caren Gibson. Pics: Mick Hutson.

Bleeding Through are fighters. Formed by frontman Brandan Schieppati more than a decade ago when their hardcore/metalcore/black metal hybrid scratched an itch his other bands at the time – namely Throwdown and Eighteen Visions – just weren't reaching, there's hardly a year gone by that they haven't faced some sort of adversity. And after such a public falling out with former label Trustkill on their last album, *Declaration*, fans couldn't help but think they were playing with just enough rope to hang themselves.

"That's really not how Bleeding Through rolls," admits Brandan backstage at Manchester's Apollo on the final UK date of Machine Head's Black Procession tour. "We don't like to make our problems so public, but at the time we felt the only way to combat Trustkill's mishandling of our lives was just to be public about it. Expose them for what they are. We weren't going to go down without telling our story."

As if the label woes weren't enough, they also lost guitarist Jona Weinhofen.

"This band wasn't a particularly happy place to be for a while," admits Brandan. "And I feel for Jona. If I moved from my home to another country [Jona originally being from Australia] to play for a band who were struggling the way Bleeding Through was because of label stuff and not knowing where things were gonna come from or what was gonna happen, I'd probably be tripped out and want to bail too."

"We understand we were asking a lot for him to come to the States," adds keyboardist Marta Peterson. "He tried it out for a long time and he's still a good friend of ours. I think he was just ready for a new path..."

That path ended up leading him into the guitarist vacancy for Bring Me The Horizon. Surely a massive kick in the teeth for the Orange County band?

"Not at all!" insists Brandan. "I honestly don't feel jealous of any band. It was just a better opportunity for Jona. That band is three times the size we are and it's fucking awesome for him and they're great kids, they really are. We've known them for a number of years."

"We actually took them on tour years ago!" adds Marta.

Ask if there was any point they thought the band might be over and the wariness begins to show.

"There was a definite strain on the band and I think that strain might have contributed to Jona leaving," sighs Brandan. "But for the rest of us, we'd gone through so much since the beginning when I started this band. We toured and slept in truckstops and stuff and it's the sorta dedication you put into a band because you love it where, when times get tough, you're not going to let something as insignificant as a record label defeat you."

What actually came of the situation was new guitarist Dave Nassie, who couldn't have been a more perfect fit for the band.

"I've been friends with Dave since 2005," says Brandan. "He was in No Use For A Name for 10 years. It's a bit of a stylistic shift but he was also in Suicidal Tendencies and Infectious Grooves for a while. We were gonna do a project together anyway, he always wanted to play metal. It was weird because Dave was at the show in LA the night Jona quit and I had literally got off the bus from talking to Jona and walked over to Dave and said, 'Alright, it's time: let's do this!' It really was as simple as that."

"He brought a whole new energy to Bleeding Through," Marta concurs. "He had been wanting to play metal for so long that he dove in at the deep end. We pretty much opened the floodgates for him and he let the metal flow!"

Bleeding Through: stepping out of the dark

"I'D RATHER BE A PIONEER OF SOMETHING SIGNIFICANT THAN CHASING BANDWAGONS"

BRANDAN SCHIEPPATI

The renewed energy in the Bleeding Through camp is obvious. With a new album, their self-titled sixth, under their belts and having found a new home on Roadrunner Records in Europe, there is a palpably relaxed atmosphere in the dressing room and a sense that rather than just killing time before the show, they're already psyching themselves up to tear the place apart.

"This run [with Machine Head] has been great!" enthuses Marta. "We've been playing a few headline shows on days off where we've thrown in a couple of new songs. The response to them has been amazing!"

"It's the first time we've ever played a brand new song that's not even out yet and kids have just been losing it," agrees Brandan. "They don't even know it and they've been going crazy. It just feels good."

With this self-titled album, out of the murk of label upheaval and personnel turbulence, Bleeding Through have smoothed off the edges, combined all their hardcore, metalcore and black metal influences and produced an album that not only defines their sound but brings the band kicking and screaming unapologetically into the next league.

"For *Declaration* we wanted to open up to different elements of Bleeding Through, like more symphonic, more black metal, more atmospheric, just more intense," Brandan claims. "Devin Townsend produced that one as we felt he would be best to bring those elements out of us. He retired from producing so we found Zeuss who is better known for working with hardcore bands [Hatebreed/Shadows Fall]." When asked if this was instrumental in bringing a slightly more hardcore flavour back to their music, Brandan is adamant: "We said, 'OK, are we still going to have that same intensity?' But Zeuss had the same sort of attitude towards our record that Devin did. They're very calming and will make you feel confident in what you're doing. They're not trying to reinvent the wheel of your band. They're like, 'What you do is fine, let's just try and get the best out of it.'"

Metalcore to some would seem like an oversaturated genre as we head out of the noughties and into the teenies. Is it a genre perhaps that Bleeding Through have outgrown and feel they need to step away from in order to spread their wings and flourish?

"It's weird," claims Brandan. "We came from the hardcore scene but we did a style of music that we thought, 'People aren't going to like this.' And then the whole 'metalcore' genre came about and although we've never publicly called ourselves a metalcore band, if people say we're 'pioneers' of it then fine. I'd rather be a pioneer of something significant than chasing bandwagons."

"The lines have blended in so far as the black and white of metal goes," continues Marta. "It doesn't matter what new flavours you bring to the table – people love it."

But people do like their little pigeonholes too. Where do they see that the Bleeding Through of 2010 fit in?

"Bleeding Through has always been the enemy of the metal purist, and we've always been the enemy of the hardcore purist admits Brandan. But we'll always be accepted by people who listen to music because it affects their soul. And that's why we create music. We don't make music for a particular genre or a certain niche of people. We want it to affect someone by listening to it, because it hits that sweet spot inside you where it's like, 'Man I love the way this makes me feel'.

"It's frustrating sometimes, though," he continues. "The new record is sort of about self-doubt and disappointment and the heartbreaking aspect of being in a band. Don't get me wrong, the travelling and meeting people aspect and playing music for people is great. But there's a point where you get used to seeing certain people in the front row and one day they're not there anymore. And the faces start changing over the years and you start feeling like, 'Man, what did we do? Why are these people moving on?'"

And with this we sense a genuine feeling of disenchantment. As Brandan and Marta will stress, Bleeding Through are not a band who aim to sell millions of records, or hundreds and thousands of tickets. They are merely a band who are passionate about what they do.

"It does make the people who have stuck with us through all the years that much more important to us, but there is a heartbreaking element and [feeling of] self-doubt," stresses Brandan.

They needn't worry, however. With a renewed energy and fighting spirit they have Manchester in rapture and it's clear that the game isn't over just yet.

"We pay attention to our audience," insists Brandan as a parting shot. "We could be playing a 1,200 capacity venue, sold out, but I swear I will remember the faces in that crowd. It's for them and their dedication that we put so much into it. And we won't go down without a fight."

***BLEEDING THROUGH* IS OUT NOW VIA ROADRUNNER RECORDS**

BLOOD BANK

WHAT MAKES UP BLEEDING THROUGH'S SOUND?

STRAPPING YOUNG LAD 16%
Former Bleeding Through producer Devin Townsend's eclectic electro-thrash influence seems to have rubbed off on the Orange County troop. All hail the new flesh.

HATEBREED 10%
BT aren't averse to throwing in the odd breakdown or gang chant into the mix. And Brandan Schieppati has the same commanding presence as Jamey Jasta onstage.

ISIS 8%
It's very subtle, but occasionally BT venture into epic soundscape territory. Check *Distortion, Devotion* for a wander into the unknown.

CHIMAIRA 37%
Tarred with the same metalcore brush but incorporating the same epic and symphonic elements, it is these Cleveland metallists that BT share most common ground with.

DIMMU BORGIR 29%
It's not just keyboards that Bleeding Through share with these Norwegian black metallers. With new guitarist Dave Nassie, they've gained a master shredder too.

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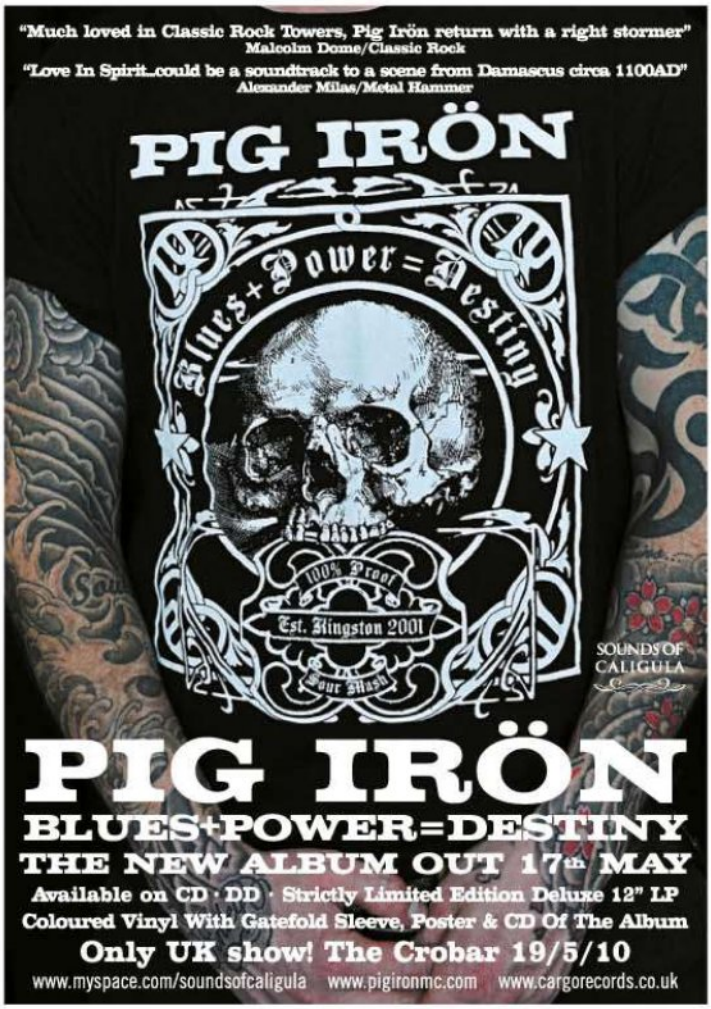

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BACK FROM HELL

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Jeff Waters is feeling rather young today, which might come as something of a surprise, given the fact that he's been guitarist, songwriter, producer and guiding light of Canadian thrashers Annihilator from the start, 26 years ago.

"I thought I was getting too old for metal, but then I look at Iron Maiden, Judas Priest and think, 'Maybe I'm not so old.' These guys are all in their 50s, some of them coming up to 60, and still out there doing it. I'm just 44, so perhaps I've got a future after all!"

You get the feeling that, if he could, Jeff would personally deliver every bought copy of the band's new, self-titled album. His passion is both impressive and infectious.

Annihilator is the band's 13th studio release in a career that really started with the thrash classic *Alice In Hell* in 1989. Yet, for many in the UK, the fact there's a new Annihilator record might come as something of a surprise.

"Our profile over here has been so low for so long there are those saying, 'They're back?' We never went away, but in about 1993, the media in Britain, America and other parts of the world decided our brand of music was dead. They all changed direction, so we got ignored. Therefore everyone thought the band had split up, or we were just licking our wounds. But... well, we put out the DVD *Live At Masters Of Rock* last year. It was filmed in front of 20,000 people in the Czech Republic. There have always been a dozen countries where we could still tour and get crowds of anything from 500 to 20,000."

In fact, Annihilator actually toured the UK in 2007, opening for Trivium, but that gets lost in the stampede to ask where they've been hiding for two decades. However, the new album is threatening to resurrect their fortunes over here. It's stuffed with full-throttle, masterful thrash, with Jeff delivering some excessive lead guitar moments, while vocalist Dave Padden growls with the menace of a young James Hetfield. So, how come after a period of relatively weak albums, the band are back with such a strong sense of purpose?

"I think the answer lies in what I said earlier. When metal died, we lost the will to make albums. There was no energy. It wasn't just us, but everyone else. I'd be the first to admit we've made some least best records, shall we say. *Remains* [1997] is not one I'm proud of, and there are very crappy songs as well, although I won't say which ones these are, because there'll be a fan on the internet going, 'That's my favourite Annihilator track!'

"But now metal's enjoying a huge resurgence, and that's the reason bands like ourselves, Testament and Exodus feel revitalised. We have a purpose now. I also think you have to bear in mind that no band does consistently excellent records. Think of Priest. I love *Painkiller* and *British Steel*, but who listens to *Turbo* or *Ram It Down*? AC/DC are one of my favourite bands, but there are a few albums I'd never play."

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"I THOUGHT I WAS GETTING TOO OLD FOR METAL, BUT THEN I LOOK AT MAIDEN AND PRIEST. THESE GUYS ARE ALL IN THEIR 50S, SO PERHAPS I'VE GOT A FUTURE AFTER ALL!" JEFF WATERS

"DAVE MUSTAINE CALLED ME IN 1989 SAYING HE WAS INTERESTED IN ME. HE DENIES IT NOW" JEFF WATERS

Jeff Waters might be a master musician and clearly driven, but as the only constant in Annihilator there's a belief that he is a control freak. However, the man from Ottowa is quick to dispel this particular myth.

"I know I'm supposed to be difficult to work with, but that's not true. Here's what happened. Back in 1984, there was a full band. But the others were into posing and going out to clubs with girls. I was the only one who realised that if we were gonna make any impact, then we all needed to lock ourselves in the basement for six to eight hours a day and practise. So, I ended up doing the all of the demo that got us signed myself – I played everything. Therefore Annihilator became just me, and that's the way it's stayed.

"Over the years I've brought in hired hands to help out in the studio, or on tour, but they were never committed to the band. Dave Padden is the first person I've come across who I wanted as a full-time member. He's been here for eight years, and now it's Jeff Waters and Dave Padden's Annihilator. So I've got half a band. Maybe one day I'll get the full set."

One interesting, and perhaps surprising, song on the album is a cover of *Romeo Delight* from the 1980 Van Halen album, *Women And Children First*. Annihilator's last cover was Judas Priest's *Hell Bent For Leather*, on the B-side of the 1993 single *Set The World On Fire*. But Jeff has a special bond with this song.

"*Women And Children First* changed my life. You may not realise it, but back then it sounded really heavy, and this is what turned me into a rock fan. I remember when the band came through Ottawa on that tour, I was too young to get in. I tried and was thrown out, but I stayed outside the arena just soaking up the sound. It was distorted sure, but that got me so excited I was converted to this sort of music. From there, I discovered Priest, Maiden, then Venom took me to hell and caught Slayer on the way down. But it started with Van Halen."

Amazingly, what attracted Jeff's attention wasn't Eddie Van Halen's inventive guitarwork, but David Lee Roth.

"I never understood why he got such a bad rap in the States, with people saying he couldn't sing. The guy has an incredible voice. It's the same as people criticising Angus Young by suggesting he can only play three chords. He makes one note sing like nobody else! But back to Van Halen, it was only later on that I understood they also had perhaps the greatest rock guitarist who ever lived.

"I stopped listening to Van Halen when I got into thrash. In those days you couldn't like Ratt and Slayer, so I went with the flow. Then in 2005 I rediscovered how great Van Halen were. I missed their reunion tour with Roth a few years back, but saw the setlist, and they opened with *Romeo Delight*. If it's good enough for them, then that's enough for me to cover it."

Talking of guitarists, there have been reports down the years that Jeff has turned down the chance to play in Megadeth at least twice. The man himself confirms it, after a fashion...

"In 1989, Dave Mustaine did call me. He said he was interested in what I did and wanted me to record my version of a Megadeth song and send it to him. I declined, because I was in a band who'd just been signed. Dave now denies that conversation happened, but when a legend like him calls, and you're just a kid, you remember it. In 2004, Dave called again, saying he was having problems with Chris Poland [who'd rejoined for *The System Has Failed*] and could I come out and play. But then he and Chris sorted things out. I wouldn't really want to join Megadeth, but I have a lot of respect for Dave, and one day perhaps we'll get to write and record something together."

For Jeff, the new album represents a fresh slate, an opportunity to convince audiences who once deserted him that Annihilator should be embraced. As such, he's relieved that the 20th anniversary of *Alice In Hell* passed last year almost without comment.

"I was really surprised that nobody made a fuss. I know it's not *Master Of Puppets* or *Reign In Blood*, but it's still highly regarded. However, that's been a blessing, because it means there's a chance for the band to move on."

So how far can Annihilator hope to progress in the modern metal sphere? Can they really recapture old glories and new, younger fans?

"That's out of my hands. Once you've recorded an album then it's down to hoping that the record company market and distribute it properly, and then you have to hope the media picks up on it, and like what you've done. But it all comes down to one thing in the end: will the fans buy it? They're the most important part of the chain.

"I feel Annihilator have delivered something as strong as anything we've done in years. I think we've still got a place in the scene. When this band first started, my ambition was to get a record deal. Here we are with our 13th album. Maybe that's an omen. I was born on February 13 at 13.00 – it's a lucky number for me."

***ANNIHILATOR* IS RELEASED ON MAY 17 VIA EARACHE RECORDS**
WWW.ANNIHILATORMETAL.COM

LONE RANGERS

TEN OTHER ONE-MAN BANDS

Motörhead
LEMMY
Lemmy once famously said: "I am Motörhead, and Motörhead is me." In the band's 35-year history, 10 others have come and gone.

Whitesnake
DAVID COVERDALE
During the band's 32 years, Cov has had 38 musicians running through the ranks. He's definitely an old tart with bandmembers.

Megadeth
DAVE MUSTAINE
Almost on a par with Coverdale, Dave Mustaine has involved 23 others during the near-30 years Megadeth have been going.

Guns N' Roses
AXL ROSE
There have been 21 others involved with GN'R over the past quarter-of-a-century. It doesn't take much to get fired by Axl these days.

Cradle Of Filth
DANI FILTH
Cradle Of Filth have been going 19 years, with 27 members taking up temporary duty alongside Dani. That's consistency of a type.

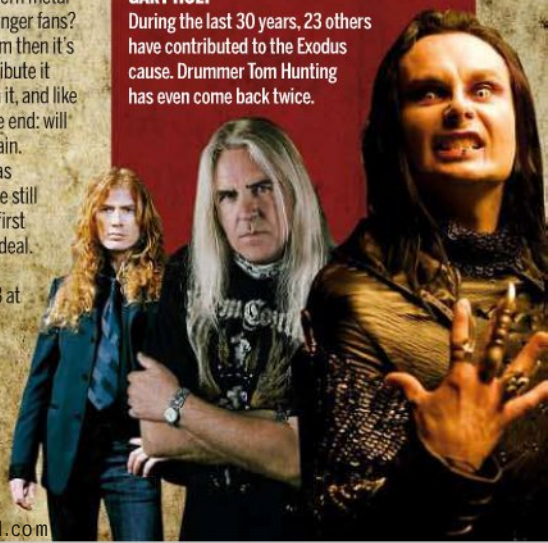
Iced Earth
JON SCHAFFER
Up there with the best of the hirers and firers, Jon has had 29 bandmates in 26 years. He likes change.

Monster Magnet
DAVE WYNDORF
By some standards, Dave is unbelievably loyal. He's still gone through 10 bandmembers in just over 20 years, though.

Saxon
BIFF
There have been 15 others in Saxon over the last 34 years. Although guitarist Paul Quinn is also an ever-present, this is Biff's band.

Venom
CRONOS
An odd one. There have been 19 others in Venom since 1978, and Cronos even left at one point. But it's his project.

Exodus
GARY HOLT
During the last 30 years, 23 others have contributed to the Exodus cause. Drummer Tom Hunting has even come back twice.



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AS I LAY DYING

PARADISE FOUND

AS I LAY DYING have survived the metalcore tag to become one of the most consistent bands of the last decade, and they haven't traded on headline-grabbing controversy, just pounding heavy metal.

WORDS: Gill.

Back in 2003, who would have guessed As I Lay Dying would survive metalcore to become one of the most reliable bands of the decade? Without the aid of gimmicky rock'n'roll personae, The San Diego quintet have built an immovable grassroots following, and have not only survived metalcore but continually seen both their music and fanbase grow.

From obscurity they have consistently risen, their 2005 album, *Frail Words Collapse*, reaching number 85 in the US charts, followed by a top 10 position with *An Ocean Between Us* in 2007. The band played The Taste Of Chaos tour in the UK with Atreyu and Story Of The Year in 2008 and wowed Bloodstock in the same year. No junkies, no divas, no loons; just five dudes who above all else want to create great heavy metal.

Their new offering, *The Powerless Rise*, furthers the band's modus operandi: a modern slab of melodic US death metal delivered with all the conviction of the zealots themselves.

"As we're writing we try to stay within the range of what As I Lay Dying is – what you identify the band with – while injecting newer elements and ideas to keep the listener on their toes," explains guitarist Phil Sgrosso. "*Anodyne Sea* has more of a classical feel. *Vacancy* has a really driving guitar riff – it's really gritty-sounding, but we'll incorporate more melody and some more delayed guitars throughout the song. There are lots of ideas here that we started exploring on the last album, but are more refined on this new one."

As for lyrical themes, Phil explains that frontman Tim Lambesis's words continue with signature AILD positivity but widened it to broadly address how humans would all be better off if we all cared a little more for each other.

"Past albums were more about things he'd learned from past relationships, friendships and experiences," he says.

No sex, drugs and rock'n'roll here then, just fist-pumping hope and unrelenting optimism.

So many bands seem to rely more and more on personalities to sell records. While the pop market has always done so, the cult of celebrity seems to be infecting our hollowed metal turf: some bands cultivate contrived reputations built on bad behaviour, others simply find larger-than-life members' antics become the focus of attention more than the music itself. Not so AILD, (completed by drummer Jordan Mancino, guitarist Nick Hipa and bassist Josh Gilbert), which without rock'n'roll caricatures has become a trusted and respected source of great metal.

"Ultimately it comes down to the music," says Phil. "That should be the foundation of any band. We always want that to be at the forefront of As I Lay Dying – just five musicians who truly care about our sound and our career as musicians. We want to be taken seriously."

As Phil admits, they did feel a certain pressure from the dogmatic church of metal to distance themselves from the many Christian bands who took it upon themselves to preach at gigs.

"We're not an outspoken Christian band. We're all Christians but we don't see ourselves like Stryper; we're not throwing Bibles out into the crowd."

So has the whole idea of 'the rockstar' shifted emphasis away from the music?

"Definitely," he agrees. "The guys with top-40 singles, those are the new rock stars and most of that is total crap. If you truly care about being an artist, then your main focus should be the music – the art that you're creating."

Avenged Sevenfold and others haven't shied away from controversy: topics such as politics, religion, violence and sexism. The image became bigger than the music. Likewise

"THIS RECORD WILL CONNECT WITH PEOPLE WHO COULDN'T HAVE CARED LESS FIVE YEARS AGO"

PHIL SGROSSO

As I Lay Dying (left to right): Phil Sgrosso, Josh Gilbert, Tim Lambesis, Jordan Mancino, Nick Hipa

Killswitch Engage's livewire guitarist Adam D never played down his onstage hi-jinx, antics which often eclipsed the talent of the band as a whole. It's a difficult line to draw – the false prophets and the genuine messiahs.

"Adam D is a big personality but he is the same loud guy onstage as off. He's become a close friend over the years because he's so genuine."

Is it bad that people tend to focus on that more than the music itself?

"It depends how you look at it," he ponders. "That hurts Killswitch a lot of the time. A lot of people can't stand Adam – they think he's too goofy. Of course there was all that controversy in the press about Adam and Slayer."

In 2009 Killswitch Engage 'left' the Slayer tour, with Slayer guitarist Kerry King saying: "I'm just offended by the silliness that goes on onstage on the part of the guitar player [Adam Dutkiewicz]," said King to MusicRadar.com "I just didn't think that side show should be on my stage. So I pulled the plug on the spot."

"It's funny because hearing people say he's an idiot or a fool onstage only drives him to do it more," adds Phil. "He doesn't take himself too seriously. He's just enjoying himself.

"To be honest, though, within the metal world most of the bands are just cool dudes: people who are stoked to be making music for a living and touring the world and hanging out. That's the vibe with any metal tour that we do. Cool normal dudes. Anyone who tries to be the rock star, it's almost like *they're* the outcast.

"People will see that with As I Lay Dying, it truly comes down to the music: we've poured our heart and soul into this new record and there wasn't a day when I wasn't pulling my hair out thinking of how it could be better."

But with media saturation at an all-time high, sensationalist tabloid story-hunting (creating) has become the norm and people are hungrier than ever for controversy. And it's not just the press; the internet has allowed every wanton firebrand to stir shit to millions, marginalising bands and members to one-dimensional entities. The reality is less exciting: most bands being made up of the varied and complex personalities that make up most social groups.

"Some people try to paint this picture of us as having this big rock star mentality, not that we act like that, but, 'Wow, we're so mainstream'. The 2007 Grammy nomination was pretty crazy. A lot of people are amazed that we went to the Grammys. We never thought we'd win; it's just great that our music was acknowledged.

"Most of the time people in bands bring things on themselves," he adds. "You hear so much about Axl Rose about how he's on 'Axl time', how he'll turn up three hours late to a show and do these outrageous things. I met someone who said that Axl Rose was one of the nicest guys he's ever met. I'm so confused by that: how he could be so self-centred but he's still a nice guy? But that's how people are: complicated."

They may not have been labelled as bar-brawling druggies or pathological manwhores, but As I Lay Dying have still fought misrepresentation.

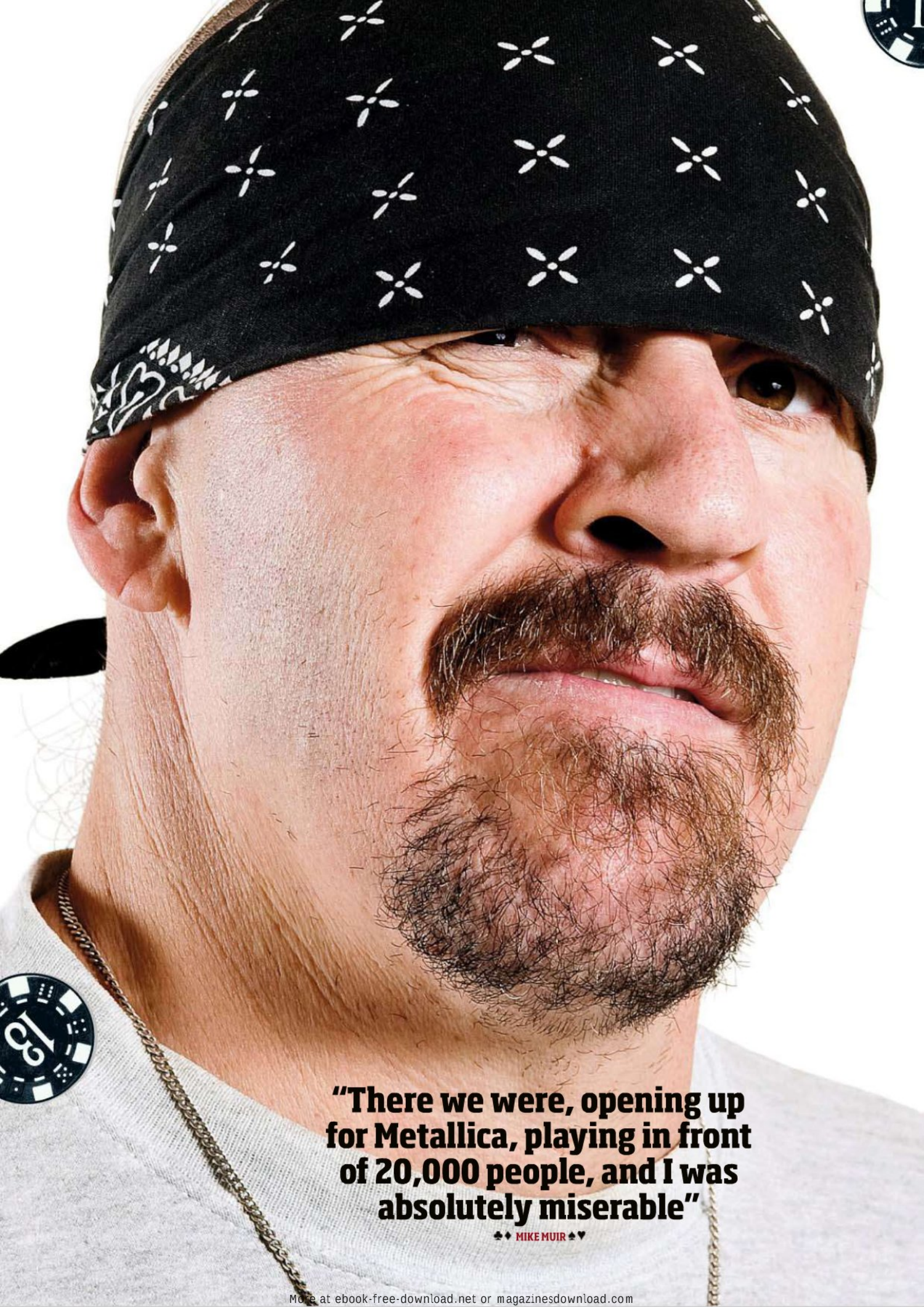
"A lot of people didn't like us because they thought we weren't a 'real' metal band. We were in our early 20s, trying to figure out what we wanted to do, and our old bassist didn't *look* like he listened to any death metal, y'know. I think for a while we were viewed as a band not to be taken seriously. A lot of people looked down on us because we've been labelled a 'Christian band'. There are a lot of people who don't like us – despite having never heard an AILD song – because it's seen as dumb to like a Christian band."

Does that spur you on?

"Absolutely," he assures us. "[Opening track off new album] *Beyond Our Suffering* is going to be something that will make people think twice before they peg us simply as a band with catchy choruses and scene melodies. I think this new record will connect with people who couldn't have cared less five years ago."

So are you ready to lay down your preconceptions about As I Lay Dying? Are you prepared to like a great band simply because they *are* a great band? If you want guns, drugs and violence we suggest you read a newspaper or turn on the telly, because As I Lay Dying only promise honest-to-God heavy metal.

***THE POWERLESS RISE* IS OUT MAY 10 VIA METAL BLADE RECORDS**



"There we were, opening up for Metallica, playing in front of 20,000 people, and I was absolutely miserable"

♣♦ MIKE MUIR ♠♥

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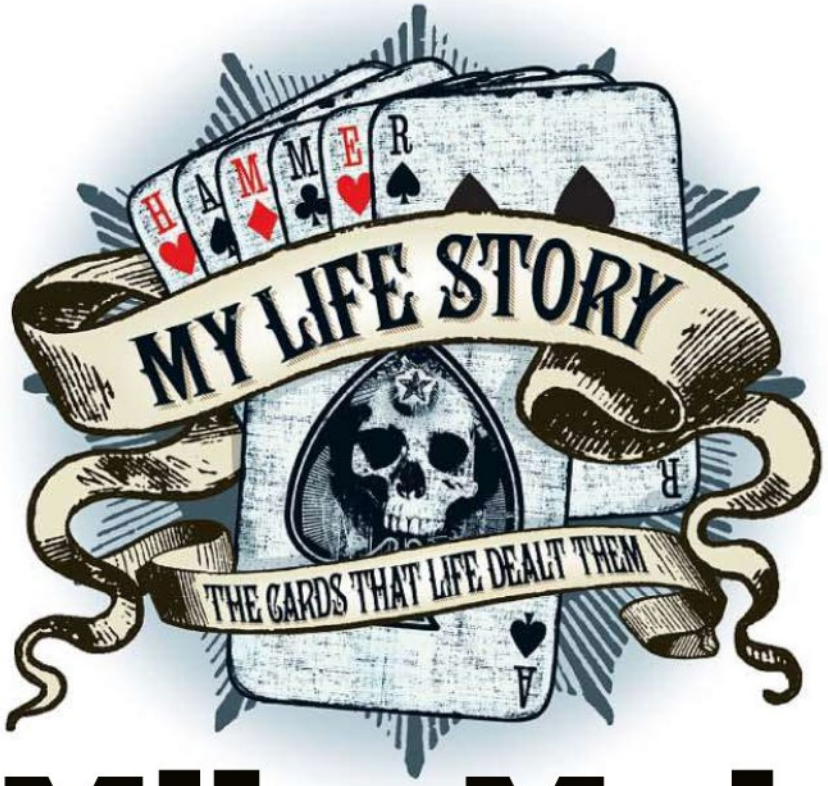

Mike Muir

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES' frontman shitcanned his band when on tour with Metallica. If there's one thing he learned on the mean streets of LA, it's to stay true to what you believe in.

Words: Dom Lawson. Pics: Will Ireland.

WHEN AND WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

"My birth certificate says LA. I take their word for it. There's a picture of my mom holding an ugly baby in front of the Queen Angels Hospital and that was me. I've no reason to think that she tried to trade me. Well, she probably would have but I don't think she did. And when? I don't talk about my birthday."

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CHILDHOOD?

"My parents were always there for me. Sometimes I didn't think I wanted them to be there, and that's esteem and it goes a lot deeper. My dad would always go without to make sure we got what we needed, and not what we thought we needed, y'know? I was very fortunate."

WAS THE AREA YOU GREW UP IN AS TOUGH AS IT SEEMS FROM THE IMAGE YOUR BAND HAS ALWAYS PRESENTED?

"In hindsight, I wouldn't want my kids to grow up there. But it was a different time and different things went on. We were in the same situation as everybody else so we thought it was normal. I never thought that anything was wrong. Every school year I got a new pair of shoes and a new pair of pants and that was all I needed. I was happy with that. I got to play baseball and do the stuff I wanted."

WHEN DID MUSIC BECOME IMPORTANT TO YOU?

"When I was probably nine or 10, my brother was 14 or 15 and getting into music, so for Christmas and my birthday he'd give me Black Sabbath and UFO records. Then when I tried to play them, he'd beat me up for playing his records! Ha ha! So I heard music based on what he was listening to and that was good because I bypassed the whole pop thing. People would have the radio on; they'd be singing along and I'd think, 'Man, this is rubbish!' The first time I heard something that made me go, 'Woah! This isn't like anything I've heard!' was a great experience. When you heard something you liked, it was a special thing."

WAS SUICIDAL TENDENCIES YOUR FIRST BAND?

"Yeah. I moved out from home when I was 16 and lived with my brother and two other guys in Oakland in Venice and we started having rent parties, so we'd charge people and that was how we paid the rent. One of my friends had drums and he lived in this apartment, and his landlord was going to evict him, so we said, 'Put the drums at our house!' so he brought them over and everyone was playing them. Then someone said, 'Dude, I've got a guitar!' and that was it. We started messing around. It wasn't like starting a band, it was just something fun. We decided to play at one of our parties and charged people more to get in! It went so well that we started renting out halls and doing our own shows."

SUICIDAL TENDENCIES ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE A WORKING-CLASS BAND FROM THE STREETS. HOW TRUE TO LIFE WAS THAT IMAGE?

"When we started off, a lot of punk rock in the early 80s was just rich kids that were rebelling. It was mostly a white, middle-class kind of thing; people trying to piss off their parents. I got into punk rock because there were no rules, then I realised that everyone that was into punk rock had rules that they expected us to follow; it was a major contradiction. I always said that it doesn't matter how you dress: do what you believe in and do it for the right reason. Don't regurgitate what everyone else is doing. People were saying, 'Dude, you can't dress that way! It's not punk rock!' But we weren't trying to fit in, we were just doing our thing, and I think that really bothered people."

DID IT SURPRISE YOU WHEN THE BAND BECAME POPULAR?

"My first experience of that was in LA. They had a commercial station, KROQ, and I was in my car and Suicidal was on and I went to push the cassette out and it wouldn't come out, and then I realised that it was on the radio! It freaked me out! A couple of days later I was at the 7-Eleven and they had KROQ on and it

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"I'm screwed up now, but not as screwed up as I was"
MIKE MUIR

came on again and I thought everyone was going to say, 'Turn that shit off!' but there were a couple of chicks saying, 'I love that song!' and it was weird. At the end of the year, we were in KROQ's top 10 songs of the year, with Culture Club and David Bowie and all that. Strange!"

YOU ALWAYS SEEMED TO BE STUCK BETWEEN PUNK AND THRASH. WERE YOU HAPPY BEING IN THE MIDDLE?

"In the States the word 'thrash' didn't really exist. The punk fanzines said we sucked because we were metal and the metal fanzines said we sucked because we were punk. The first people that really got into us were the people from where we were from and the skaters too. We'd go to a lot of skate contests and you'd hear a lot of Suicidal. It got to the point where we had such a mixture of people at our shows and no one group was dominant, and when you get bigger that way, that really bothers other people too!"

HOW DID IT FEEL WHEN YOU RECRUITED ROBERT TRUJILLO ON BASS, RELEASED *LIGHTS CAMERA REVOLUTION*, AND SEEMED TO GET SUCKED INTO THE WHOLE 'FUNK METAL' THING THAT WAS GOING ON AT THE TIME?

"Robert was never into heavy music. A Mexican wasn't going to hear any really heavy music in Venice, except for Suicidal! There was a debate about whether the bass should be played with fingers or a pick, because that's what everyone does, but I said, 'Rob, we're not everybody! I want you to slap it!' When that record came out, no one said that it was funk, but when we did Infectious Grooves, everyone started saying it was funk. No one thought *Send Me Your Money* was funk until Infectious Grooves came out. It's just that the bass was so prominent and it brought that across more. We took a different approach and added a power to the music that people hadn't done before."

WAS THAT THE PEAK OF YOUR SUCCESS?

"In England, we went downhill at that point, but in the rest of the world we went up! But we had *Lights Camera Revolution* out for nine months and then we went on tour in the US with Queensrÿche. At that time in 1991, Queensrÿche was the most played band on MTV and I heard they were really worried about taking us out! They said, 'You guys might have to go home!' Ha ha! But it worked really well and we played 77 shows. The album had been out for nine months, then in a couple of months we sold another 200,000 records with no airplay, no video or anything. It was great to see that if we can play in front of people, a lot of people are gonna like it. Back then we did a lot of stuff and you stopped and thought, 'Dude, I will always remember this!' Fortunately there's been a lot of times like that."

SUICIDAL SPLIT UP BRIEFLY IN THE 90S. WHAT HAPPENED?

"We were opening up for Metallica, playing in front of 20,000 people, and I was absolutely miserable. You walk out at a show and it's like, 'I don't want to be around these people!' because it's the people I tried to avoid in school. Someone comes up and goes [adopts annoying shouting voice], 'Dude! You're that fuckin' dude! Fuckin' A, dude!' It's a five-minute conversation like that and I'm thinking, 'Scotty, beam me up!', you know? My head's spinning. This is not what I want to do! The manager would say, 'The bottom line is, it doesn't matter as long as you're selling records!' and when he said that, a lightbulb went off in my head and I said, 'You know what? It does matter.' Sometimes it's hard, but it's time to take a step back and re-evaluate everything."

THESE DAYS YOU SEEM TO DO THINGS AT A MORE LEISURELY PACE. WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO GET OFF THE TREADMILL AND TAKE A MORE RELAXED APPROACH TO BEING IN SUICIDAL?

"We've always said that we don't want this to be a job. When you're touring nine months of the year, it's your life and you sit there going, 'Is this the life that I really want? Am I really accomplishing something that I think is important?' and when you're in that situation there's going to be many times when you're sick or something happens and you think, 'I don't wanna be here!' but you've just got to do it. We live in our own skewed universe, you know?"

THE BAND FORMED NEARLY 30 YEARS AGO. WHAT DO YOU HEAR WHEN YOU LISTEN TO *INSTITUTIONALIZED*? CAN YOU STILL RELATE TO THAT TEENAGE KID?

"Definitely. When I was 18 I was going, 'When I was 16 I was screwed up!' and when I was 21 I was going, 'When I was 18 I was screwed up!' and when I was 25 I was going, 'When I was 21 I was screwed up!' I look back and I can say that I'm screwed up now, but not *as* screwed up! But that first album is a great record and I'm proud of what we did. When we did that record there wasn't really an audience for what we were doing. Selling 5,000 copies was a big deal. You just did what you did and it was a surprise if anyone else liked it!"

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING YOU IN 2010?

"My dad said a long time ago, 'If you want to be happy, you've got to learn how to say no.' I learned to say 'no' a long time ago, and now people accept it! I think I've earned the right to say it and I think that's great because then when you say yes, it's a good thing. That's the best thing for me, feeling in control. That's not something a lot of people can say. So yeah, I'm happy to be able to say yes and happy to say no. And I wake up the next day and I have no regrets."

***LIVE AT THE OLYMPIC AUDITORIUM* DVD IS OUT NOW VIA SUICIDAL RECORDS**

CRAP SHOOT

What gets Mike's seal of approval?

FAVOURITE BOOK

"It's the 'Book Of Life', man. Too many people look to books for answers and they're not living their life! Book smart isn't street smart. I learned that a long time ago."

FAVOURITE FILM

"*Braveheart*. I reluctantly went to the movie and I thought, 'There's no way I can sit through a movie for three hours!' but it was great. I didn't expect to like it."

FAVOURITE FOOD

"I'm a fusion food guy. Where I live in Australia, they have a lot of cool Asian fusion food. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't, but I'm not into that same old comfort food thing like spaghetti. But if I'm on Death Row and I have to pick something, you've got to go with a big-ass steak."

FAVOURITE VENUE

"The Santa Monica Civic. We grew up there and it's the fourth street from the beach and we went to so many shows there. It was great when we were able to play there and I'd like to play there again!"

FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION

"The first time I went to Australia I thought, 'This place is really cool!' We went to Perth. People there are so friendly. I remember driving up and down the coast in Perth and Freemantle and it looked like every kind of postcard. It's beautiful. So I've always said it's my favourite city in the world."

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REDEEMER GIRLS

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SPANISH INQUISITION

SKINDRED were in our area. So we sent Cardinal Gill on a mission to search and destroy the Brit ragga metallers. Fetch the machete. This could get messy...

Why are you in *Metal Hammer*?

Rod Turner, email

Benji Webbe [vocals]: "Gonna be like that is it? What's gonna be next? 'Why are you black?'"

Dan Pugsley [bass]: "There is an element of our music that is undeniably metal, whether you like it or not."

Are there many Rastafarians in Wales?

Ian Airey, email

Benji: "I don't even know what a Rastafarian is..."

Dan: "There are tons in Cardiff. All the people came to Tiger Bay from the West Indies. It's a big dock. There are tons."

How many times do you plan to reissue *Shark Bites & Dog Fights* before it dawns on you no one will buy it?

Glen Morse, email

Dan: "Is that a witty assault on what happened with *Babylon*? We had some problems with record labels over the years so *Babylon* did get released a few times."

Mikey Demus [guitar]: "How's *your* album doing, mate? Have you reissued it or have you never released anything?"

Sweet Home Alabama is a classic song and it was a sad day indeed when your plane went down and... wait... Skindred? Who?

Joe Evans, via Facebook

Mikey: "Someone likening us to Lynyrd Skynyrd because of the band name... what do you say to that? Er, thanks for likening us to a band who are 90 per cent dead?"

Benji: "Someone wanted us to drive our tour bus off a cliff in America because we wouldn't play in their little shithole town. They wished that we'd die. Bit extreme."

Have you seen your bandmates doing anything you wish you could unsee?

Roger Page, email

Benji: "I mooned the boys yesterday during soundcheck."

Dan: "If I could get one of those sticks from *Men In Black* and just wipe that memory that would be pretty nice."

Weren't you famous in America once?

Jeff, via Facebook

Mikey: "We still are. So fuck you. Stadium-sized, mate."

Benji: "Especially down my street; loads of people love it."

***Metal Hammer*:** And the new record?

Benji: "I don't know how it's done in terms of record sales but people are coming to the shows and singing all the words to *Electric Avenue*."

All: "Ha ha ha!"

That Welsh accent's put on, isn't it Benji?

David Singer, email

Benji: "Yes. I'm from Surrey really... I just want to be like Lostprophets. Can't you tell from the way I have my hair and the way I suck my cheeks in in photos? What the fuck?!"

You're on a desert island. Someone needs to be eaten in order for the rest to survive. Who gets eaten first?

Kris Forbes via Facebook

Benji: "Me because I'm bigger than the rest of them. [Pointing at Mikey] He's just fucking bones, he is. I'm a grandfather, I've rocked many festivals and I've had a good life."

Mikey: "You're quite compassionate really, aren't you? I want his calf – that looks quite solid."

***Metal Hammer*:** Dan, any particular cut of Benji you're after?

Dan: "Shoulder, maybe."

Benji: "I'll have a bit of me brisket, I reckon."

What do you plan on covering next? Aswad's *Don't Turn Around*? Big Mountain's *Sweet Sensual Love*?

Graham, via Facebook

Benji: "I know [Big Mountain's] *Baby I Love Your Way*, but that was a cover anyway. Imagine that done like Black Flag – amazing!"

Mikey: "We don't have any plans to do any more covers but we'd do either of those and we'd fucking do them justice as well."

***Metal Hammer*:** How about *Mysterious Girl*?

Mikey: "We could do a Peter Andre medley and include *Insania* in there."

How come you never play *Gorrit*? It's your best song.

Nigel Dawson, email

Mikey: "Wrong band."

Benji: "Hang on, hang on, hang on. We stopped playing that in 1993..."

Mikey: "Before the band even formed."

All: "Ha ha ha!"

Benji: "If it was necessary we'd do it. I wouldn't play Dub War with these guys because I don't think they could play Dub War like Dub War."

Dan: "This band's been around longer than Dub War; we've released more records and sold more records. Sure, that's not the be all and end all, but we've touched more people. And not in a wrong way."

Benji: how does it feel that you're better known for your guest vocals?

Paul Johnson, email

Benji: "I don't think that's true. I've only done fucking two of them and the Bullet For My Valentine one [*Take It Out On Me* from *Scream Aim Fire*] I never even got a credit for! I did the Max Cavalera one [*Quilombo* from Soulfly], which was great because we just made the song up in the studio."

Arya Goggin: did your parents name you that for a bet?

Mike Phillips, email

All: "Ha ha ha!"

Arya Goggin [drums]: "Yeah, they wanted to make me a constant talking point, I'm sure. Goggin is from Ireland, Arya from Iran. School life was really good with my name."

What marvel of engineering would you most liken your career to: the Hindenburg airship, the Titanic or the space shuttle Challenger?

Tony Johnston, email

Mikey: "Ours is like the bullet train; it's like none of them."

Dan: "We're probably the biggest we've ever been. It's been a slow, steady, upward climb."

***Metal Hammer*:** Like Thomas The Tank Engine.

Benji: "Exactly, and it's still on fucking telly!"

Mikey Demus: is Chaka really your dad?!

Neil Downey, email

Mikey: [Pointing to his dad] "Tell him that."

Mr Demus: "I put a guitar in his hand when he was 12 years old. Six weeks later he was able to play the beginning of Johnny B Goode, which was pretty good for six weeks."

***Metal Hammer*:** ...for a dude in a reggae band!

Mr Demus: "In six more weeks he could play *Little Wing*."

Mikey: "Then I had it nicked out the back of the car."

Your bus is driving over a high bridge and you notice Bullet For My Valentine tied up in the middle of the road. In order to avoid hitting them you have no choice but to swerve into the river below...

David Moody, email

Mikey: "That's not even a question. But no, we're not going to kill anyone."

***Metal Hammer*:** Not even for not getting a credit on someone's album?

Benji: "Right!"

When you're talking to Mikey, how do you distinguish which end is which?

Ade Huff, email

All: "Aaaaha ha ha ha!"

Benji: "We talk to the end with the glasses on."

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"I WANT TO BE LIKE LOSTPROPHETS. CAN'T YOU TELL FROM THE WAY I SUCK MY CHEEKS IN?"

BENJI WEBBE

Skindred (left to right): Benji Webbe, Mikey Demus, Arya Goggin, Dan Pugsley

Conclusion

Yeah OK, so Skindred are one of our favourite live bands, but we just can't forgive that cover of *Electric Avenue*. Mario! Strap them in and flick the switch.

Journalism: a front operation for the global Illuminati conspiracy. Think you can do better? Check out who's coming up in Spanish Inquisition at www.metalhammer.co.uk and send your questions to chainmail@futurenet.co.uk.

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Judas Priest (left to right): Ian Hill, KK Downing, Rob Halford, Dave Holland, Glenn Tipton

GETTY IMAGES

NEIL ZLOZOWER

Track listing

Judas Priest

'BREAKING THE LAW'
'RAPID FIRE'
'METAL GODS'
'GRINDER'
'UNITED'
'LIVING AFTER MIDNIGHT'
'YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE OLD TO BE WISE'
'THE RAGE'
'STEELER'

ROB HALFORD: VOCALS
KK DOWNING: GUITAR
GLENN TIPTON: GUITAR
IAN HILL: BASS
DAVE HOLLAND: DRUMS
PRODUCED BY: TOM ALLOM

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The Story Behind... Judas Priest British Steel

IT WAS 1980, one of the most important years in the history of metal. NWOBHM kicked in with the release of the debut albums from Iron Maiden and Def Leppard and two classics from Saxon. AC/DC offered up *Back In Black*, Motörhead gave us *Ace Of Spades* and Black Sabbath pitched in with *Heaven And Hell*. Oh, and someone had the idea of organising a festival at Donington Park, called it Monsters Of Rock and started an ongoing legend. Right up there with all of these landmarks was an album called *British Steel* from Judas Priest, which in many ways defined the style, sound and image of metal as we know it today.

Words: Malcolm Dome.

Guitarist KK Downing refers to it as The People's Album. And the recording process included broken milk bottles, a billiard cue and a cutlery drawer. Oh, and then there was the story that the tapes of the album were stolen and held to ransom.

"I think this is where we found our direction," says vocalist Rob Halford, recalling that glorious period in Priest's history. "Up until that point, although we'd done well, there was a feeling in the band that we really didn't have a proper focus."

Priest had started in 1969, although they came into their own five years later. By this time the lineup was cemented with Rob Halford (vocals), Glenn Tipton and KK Downing (guitar) and Ian Hill (bass). For debut album *Rocka Rolla* (released in 1974), they had John Hinch on drums. But, in classic Spinal Tap fashion, the band were to have a succession of drummers over the next few years.

The first Priest classic album, 1976's *Sad Wings Of Destiny*, was to be their last for independent label Gull. A deal with CBS (now Columbia) led to a significant step up for Priest. Each of the next three albums – *Sin After Sin* (1977), *Stained Class* and *The Killing Machine* (both 1978; *The Killing Machine* was called *Hell Bent For Leather* in America) – saw the band becoming increasingly popular. By 1979 they'd even had a Top 20 in the UK with *Take On The World*. The same year, the live *Unleashed In The East* gave Priest their first top 10 album in Britain, and finally cracked the top 100 in America.

"Ringo Starr said not to ride bikes on the grounds - so we did that"

KK DOWNING

"I think Judas Priest were ready for the big breakthrough in the States," says producer Tom Allom, who first worked with the Brummie band on their *Unleashed In The East* album. "They had steadily built up their following, and what they now needed, really, was a commercial album."

The band decided to work with Tom Allom again, on their next studio album.

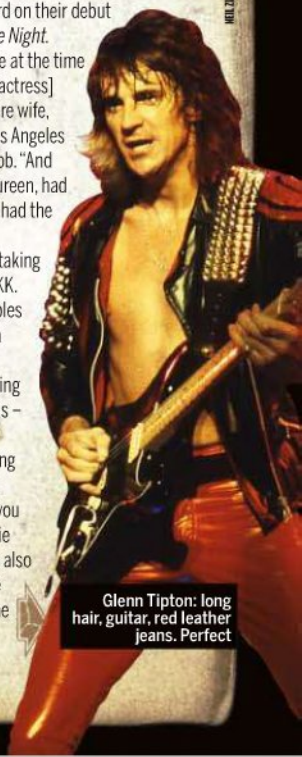
"We'd met Tom a few years earlier, but turned down the chance to work with him, because we thought he was too posh!" recalls Glenn, with something of a chuckle.

"Tom really was a great man to be with," adds guitarist KK Downing. "He knew how to party as well. There were many nights when we'd have to get him home and tuck him in bed!"

So Priest and their new producer went down to Tittenhurst Park, a 72-acre estate near Ascot in Berkshire. At the time it was owned by former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr, who'd bought it from John Lennon in 1973. The latter had built Ascot Sound Studios in the grounds, and Ringo renamed this Startling Studios. It was here that Priest and Tom had mixed *Unleashed In The East* in 1979, and later the same year, Tom had worked at the studio with Def Leppard on their debut album *On Through The Night*.

"Ringo wasn't there at the time we were in. He'd met [actress] Barbara Bach, his future wife, and had gone off to Los Angeles to be with her," says Rob. "And Ringo's then-wife, Maureen, had also left. So we totally had the place to ourselves."

"But Ringo wasn't taking any chances," laughs KK. "He took all the valuables out, and also set down rules for us to follow. There was to be no riding of bikes on the grounds – so we did that. There was also to be no fishing in the lake – so we did that as well! What do you expect from a Brummie heavy metal band? He also had two papier-mâché dinosaurs hidden in the grounds – they were



Glenn Tipton: long hair, guitar, red leather jeans. Perfect

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massive. And when you came back pissed from the pub up the road, they could really scare you!"

Although Startling was a more than decent studio, Priest decided they preferred the ambience of the house itself when it came to recording.

"We set up each member in a different room, and the vibe worked really well," says Tom. "I think KK might have been in the room with the famous white piano, the one you see Lennon playing in the video for *Imagine*."

"For some reason, the recording equipment was all in a tiny room behind the kitchen," adds Rob. "Not sure why that location was chosen, but it worked well enough."

Priest also made a decision to go into the studio without having everything written and ready – something they'd never done previously.

"I can't remember why we chose to do it that way," admits Glenn. "We'd never done that in the past, and we never worked like that again. We had about 60 per cent of the songs written and ready to go. I know *The Rage* was written in the studio, and so was *Living After Midnight*."

"There's a story behind *Living After Midnight*," reveals KK. "One night, Glenn and I were working on some guitar ideas, when all of a sudden Rob appeared in the doorway, in his dressing gown. 'Do you mind?' he said. 'Some of us are trying to sleep. It's after midnight.' That's where the song came from."

Judas Priest: firing on all cylinders

"We made a lot of different sounds on *Metal Gods*: slamming doors and even putting light bulbs in a microwave"

KK DOWNING

While the band were busy both recording and writing, the process itself was comparatively smooth, with little sign of any external pressures.

"We felt comfortable with it all," says Ian Hill. "There was a real discipline in the studio, and no sense of panic. The whole thing just went without a hitch."

"We were in the studio for exactly one calendar month," adds Tom Allom. "From February 1 to February 28."

Priest also had to be inventive in order to get certain sound effects. For instance, what you hear at the end of *Rapid Fire*, which comes across as a scythe cutting through the air, is actually a billiard cue being wielded by Rob. And the sound of marching robots across *Metal Gods* is... cutlery!

"There was no such thing as samples in those days," recalls Rob. "So bands had to be a lot more imaginative. I often feel sorry for young musicians now, because they've got everything at their fingertips. That sort of thing can stunt creativity."

"What we did for *Metal Gods* was load up a drawer with cutlery," says Glenn, with a straight face. "Then we shook it around, and took out spoons and knives until we got it just right. It was trial and error, but worth it in the end."

But that's not the end of the innovation. For the song *Breaking The Law*, the sound of smashed glass was generated by...

"Milk bottles!" laughs Glenn. "We just got a load of them, smashed them on the ground and recorded it. It had the desired impact. But the sound of the sirens is real. We went outside and recorded a passing police car – or at least that's my recollection of events!"

There is an alternative suggestion as to how the siren effect was generated, namely through KK on his guitar, using the whammy bar. However, even the guitarist himself is currently unable to remember if that's the case.

"I think we did try a lot of different things, like a door slamming for the start of *Metal Gods*, and even putting light bulbs in a microwave," KK says, "but I don't know if any of those things ended up being used."

The album was wrapped up at the end of February, and only two days later it was in New York being mastered.

"I went straight from Tittenhurst Park to Morgan Studios in London without any sleep to have it cut," says Tom Allom, "and then flew to New York for the mastering."

It was at this juncture that a story emerged in the press that the album's tapes had been stolen by a gang in New York, and were held to ransom. According to this press release, Priest paid £50,000 to get back these irreplaceable tapes. But it all turned out to be a hoax, fabricated by the band's publicist at the time, one Tony Brainsby, who was notorious for planting such sensational – and utterly false – stories on behalf of his clients.

At the time, KK Downing insisted that neither the band nor their management had a clue about the report being sent out by Tony.

"This is utter shit!" he said. "And really embarrassing. If we'd have got wind of what Tony was planning, then we'd have told him not to do it. Judas Priest doesn't need such cheap publicity. Our music is what makes us stand or fall."

Although the press release at the time was full of factual inaccuracies – including the claim that the album was recorded in France – one thing it did get right was that the record was still untitled. But that quickly changed, with Ian Hill coming up with what has become an iconic moniker, *British Steel*.

"I thought it represented everything we were trying to do," says the bassist. "We were very British in sound, and the title just came to me. I think workers at the British Steel Corporation (which was the nationalised company making steel at the time) were on strike, so the name was in the news."

"When Ian first put forward *British Steel*, we did think, 'Is this really right for the album?'" admits Rob, as he explains the choice. "But the more time went on, the more it did seem appropriate."

Glenn, who'd worked for the British Steel Corporation for five years, remembers that the band didn't have an alternative album title anyway.

"We never really thought about it. And once the album cover design came back (by Roslav Szaybo), it made sense. That artwork really brought the whole thing to life.

"I remember the hand that gripped the razor blade, and in some countries they thought it was offensive because it looked like it was slicing into the fingers, so they airbrushed it so that it was just actually holding the razor blade, to which we said, 'No, we don't like that – it's got to have the finger slicing there.'"

These days, though, KK does have an alternative title in mind, one he feels fits the style and attitude of the record.

"It came to me one night: *Sermons For The Teenage Rebel*. You look at some of the song titles – *Breaking The Law*, *You Don't Have To Be Old To Be Wise*, *The Rage* – they've got a real feel of youth angst about them. That's why I believe what we made was a people's album – it told their story. Everyone back then thought that the punks were the real agitators, but hey,

SOMEWHERE IN TIME

Where Judas Priest stand in the chain of inspiration.

Van Halen
Van Halen

The 1978 debut from the LA masters is credited with shaking metal and dragging it into a new, sleeker era, not least with guitarwork like no one had heard.

Judas Priest
British Steel

Released in 1980, it was the commercial breakthrough album for Priest. Their sixth studio record, this is stuffed with great songs, delivered with a full-on power. It's one of the reasons why 1980 is regarded as a seminal metal year. *British Steel* rivalled any of the old hands' releases and let the new guys know they still rocked.

Black Sabbath
Master Of Reality

Released in 1981, the third album from the pioneers of heavy metal is often regarded as the finest record the band made with Ozzy Osbourne.

Iron Maiden
The Number Of The Beast

Released in 1982, the third album from Maiden was the one that introduced Bruce Dickinson and took the band to a new level.

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TOM ALLOM

The producer extraordinaire who brought the steel.

A veteran with over 40 years' experience as a producer and engineer, Tom Allom has been involved with some of the most celebrated metal records of all time. He was the engineer on the first three Black Sabbath albums ("Who knew then how important they'd become?!") and from 1979 spent a decade working with Priest on two live albums and six studio ones. He also produced the debut from Def Leppard, 1980's *On Through The Night*, and it was Def Lep who came up with his nickname The Colonel.

"Most people think it was Priest," says Glenn, "but it was Leppard. I think it was because he was so posh!" After a two-decade absence, during which he's been very busy working with a variety of bands, Tom was recalled to the Priest fold for the *Touch Of Evil* live album last year (which included the Grammy Award-winning *Dissident Aggressor*), and has now worked with them on the expanded edition of *British Steel*.

"To my way of thinking, the band are better than ever," says Tom. Will this reunion be taken any further? "Right now, I have no idea. But I'd love the opportunity to work in the studio with them again."

we'd come up with an album that, lyrically, was more in tune with what the kids were thinking on the streets than any punk record!"

While the band had no doubts they'd recorded something strong, the same was also true of their record label. Howard Thompson, who was the A&R man working closely with Priest at the time, was convinced they'd delivered the goods.

"I thought *Living After Midnight* sounded like a hit the minute I heard it, and I liked *Breaking The Law*, too. I mean, how could you not? I think it would be fair to say Tom Allom played a significant part in their success. He was able to deliver – most effectively – on the heavy and the commercial fronts.

"The band were all solid, easy-going, polite but reticent guys. Like many musicians, they weren't too keen to interact with the record company guy. But they did what they needed to do – deliver a great album – so a quiet, mutual respect was established."

Living After Midnight was released as the first single from the album in March 1980. It got to number 12 in the UK charts, accompanied by a promotional video, directed by Julien Temple and filmed at Sheffield City Hall. Temple also directed the video for *Breaking The Law*, shot in a branch of Barclay's Bank in Central London. In the pre-MTV era, such things were still very rare.

"I'd worked with the Sex Pistols, and after that nobody would touch me," recalls Julien. "But Judas Priest didn't seem to mind, and I ended up doing quite a bit of work with them in the end.

I came up with the storylines for *Breaking The Law* and *Living After Midnight* by wandering around listening to them on an early Walkman, while smoking a spliff.

"I always regarded the band as a comedy act, and deep down so did they. We certainly had a lot of laughs on the set!"

British Steel was released in April 1980, reaching number four in the UK (the highest-charting album the band would ever have in Britain) and making it to number 34 in the United States. The reaction was immediate – it belonged to them. That's the reason so many big names in metal say they were influenced by it."

One of those is unquestionably Scott Ian of Anthrax, for whom this was a landmark release.

"*British Steel* was a huge influence on, and precursor to, what the Big Four of American Thrash would become," he explains. "It's one of those perfect records at the perfect time. Picking up from where they left off on the previous album, Priest kicked metal in the ass with breakneck songs like *Rapid Fire* and *Steeler*, and set the bar (that they had already set pretty high) even higher.

Rob Halford: "Lot #38, my massive bike. Who'll start the bidding?"

"To be able to do something like that was a fantastic experience," says Ian Hill. "We are a band who like to do things we've never tried before, and to do the whole of an album was new for us."

"One thing it did do was ensure there were no arguments about setlist!" adds KK with a smile.

So where do the band believe this album stands in terms of the whole Judas Priest catalogue?

"Right at the top," insists Rob, something with which the rest of the band fully agree. And with the number of bands – new and old – who continue to cite its seminal sounds as an inspiration, it's hard to argue with that view. It remains one of the greatest heavy metal albums of all time – defining both the era and the genre. Where would metal be without *British Steel*? A timeless masterpiece.

BRITISH STEEL: LEGACY EDITION IS OUT MAY 11 VIA SONYBMG

"We knew it was good, just not *how* special it would turn out"

GLENN TIPTON

Priest had come up with an absolutely storming record.

"At the time, we knew it was good, just not *how* special it would turn out," admits Glenn. "You just don't realise when you're in the middle of the process what you have is a classic. Only later on, when everyone tells you... that's when it really hits home."

Rob has no doubts at all that one of the key elements that makes it stand out was the production on it.

"I think with every great album, there's a timeless feel. You listen to the first Black Sabbath album, or Led Zeppelin *II*, or any of the wonderful Pink Floyd records and they don't just belong to an era. If I had a time machine right now, I could take *British Steel* back or forwards, play it to people and they would feel

"The overall energy on this record is unlike any other Priest record; the tracks literally jump off the record into my ears, all driven by Tipton and Downing's iconic riffs and Halford's insane vocals. In 1980 it was state of the art, and it absolutely holds up today."

Priest started the British Steel tour around the UK and Europe in early March 1980, supported by the fastest-rising name in metal at the time... Iron Maiden!

"I still think back to that tour and get goosebumps," laughs Rob. "Can you just imagine it – Judas Priest and Iron Maiden touring together? It's one of the all-time great metal tours!"

In America, the band toured with support acts Def Leppard and the Scorpions, returning to Britain on August 16 to play at the first Monsters Of Rock Festival at Donington – second on the bill to Rainbow. In a year where so much history was made, Judas Priest were right at the epicentre.

Last year, the band revisited *British Steel*, playing the album in its entirety on a US tour. The upcoming reissue of the album will include a DVD and live CD, filmed and recorded at the Seminole Hard Rock Arena in Hollywood, Florida on August 17, 2009. It will also be available as a special vinyl edition.

KK Downing: blond ambition

THE NEXT CHAPTER...

Priest enjoyed great success in the 80s. 1982's *Screaming For Vengeance* sold in excess of two million copies in the US, and in 1985 they were one of only two metal names to appear at the landmark Live Aid extravaganza (the other being the reunited original Black Sabbath).

There was the occasional lowpoint, such as 1986's *Turbo*, where Priest were criticised for attempting a slicker image and sound. In 1990, the parents of two Priest fans who'd committed suicide while allegedly listening to the band's music, took out a lawsuit against the band. Thankfully, it was thrown out of court.

By the time they released *Painkiller* in 1990 (with Scott Travis on drums), the band were in their prime – which was why it came as shock when Rob Halford quit.

It took the remaining quartet until 1996 to find the right replacement in Tim 'Ripper' Owens, who'd previously been in a Priest tribute band. Despite his obvious qualities it didn't work out, so it was a relief when the Metal God returned to the ranks in 2003. *The Angel Of Retribution* album (2005) proved the band were back to their best, while the conceptual *Nostradamus* (2008) showed they were still ready to try new things.

So, what of the future?

"We have several options," says Glenn. "A new album, tour again doing the whole of *British Steel*... and we want to stage a theatrical production of *Nostradamus*. We'll take our time and make the right choice – I hope!"

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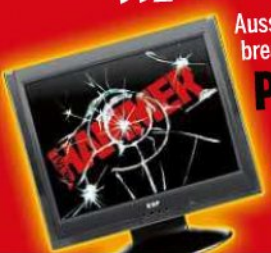

DEFTONES
DIAMOND EYES
WARNER

Nu metal-transcending Californians rise above adversity

DIAMOND Eyes marks 15 years since Deftones' 1995 debut, *Adrenaline*. In that time, the band have outgrown their reputation as the 'thinking man's nu metal band' to be known more simply as one of the best and most respected metal bands of the 90s, as popular with Metallica fans as with Tool fans. While 1997's *Around The Fur* and 2000's *White Pony* took their popularity to new heights, 2006's *Saturday Night Wrist* was tepidly received. Two years after that, bassist Chi Cheng was involved in a tragic accident and left in a semi-conscious state. The decision to shelve the work in progress (*Eros*), recruit former Quicksand bassist Sergio Vega and start work on a new album was doubtless no easy decision.

It just so happens that what could have been a confused, disjointed and depressing record has become their most gripping. The generally directionless meanderings of *Saturday Night Wrist* are gone, leaving a collection of songs that are urgent and direct – each one a lean, mean, emotional and sonic explosion. The album's title track opens proceedings with a massive bludgeoning riff slightly reminiscent of Pantera's *Walk*, that leads quickly into a strong, pleading chorus. The following *Royal* also builds the pace with its frequently changing parts. The massive middle-eight is a huge, repetitive and driving riff that nags aggressively.

Deftones, not least due to the versatility of Chino Moreno's vocals,

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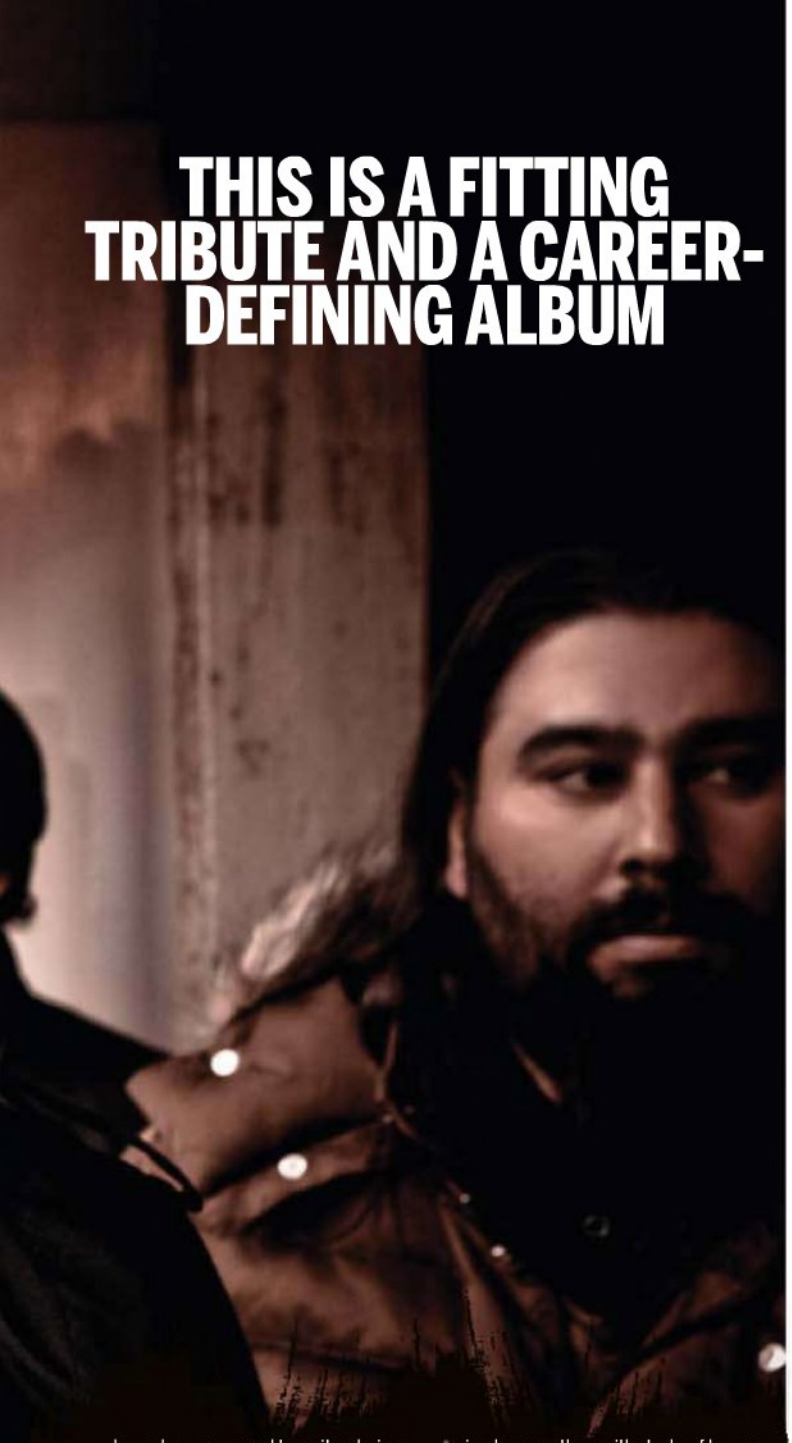
THIS IS A FITTING TRIBUTE AND A CAREER-DEFINING ALBUM



have always managed to emit a glorious ambiguity. Songs flit like some macabre airborne sprite, from threatening to playful, from hopeful to haunting, from life-affirming to utterly despondent. Musically it throws you into uncomfortable places before reeling you back into safety, only to throw out a new sonic curveball, then bring you back to dry land. *You've Seen The Butcher*, with its mass of increasingly frenetic percussion and Alice In Chains groove, *Sextape* and album highlight *Beauty School* are typical examples of such extremes, the latter a writhing attack of sumptuous guitar tones, whirring bass and skippy beats. *Beauty School*'s melancholic and brooding vocals are almost reminiscent of Depeche Mode and the song has a dense yet spacious, dream-like atmosphere, as if arriving at the Elysium Fields slightly stoned.

On the other end of the spectrum, *CMND/CNTRL* is a heavy anthem with stacks of bounce, accompanied by a luscious chorus of driving chords and intricate vocal play through pounding beats. Hidden in the mix, electronic noises sizzle and whoop as the track peaks. Another energetic high is *Risk*, with its planet-weight guitar riff building to an overwhelming, 360° complexity.

Chino has always been evasive about what his songs mean. There will doubtless be references to their fallen brother, and while specifics may be obscured it is clear that the songs are brimming with meaning and alive with emotion. There's an abundance of ideas, sounds and shapes within a Deftones album, all of which leaves you sated and post-climactically exhausted. Deftones have not only created a fitting tribute but a career-defining album. **[9]**

GILL

INFLUENCED BY
FAITH NO MORE, HELMET, DEPECHE MODE

ALSO TRY
THRICE
Vheissu
ISLAND, 2005
WILL HAVEN
El Diablo
BIELER BROS, 1997
AUDREY HORNE
Le Fol
INDIE RECORDINGS, 2007

ANNIHILATOR
ANNIHILATOR
EARACHE

Canuck thrash legends return in style

IT'S been so long since Jeff Waters has produced a genuinely classic album that it'd be easy to dismiss the hype surrounding his band's 13th studio effort as disingenuous twaddle. But it swiftly becomes apparent, as the face-melting leads and neck-wrenching speed metal riffs of *The Trend* blaze from the speakers, that this is the first Annihilator album in 20 years to successfully combine state-of-the-art technicality and sound with songs of unerring quality. *Annihilator* plays it straight, with songs like *Ambush* and *Nowhere To Go* providing a missing link between old-school values and contemporary crunch, while the blistering lead breaks make it plain that Annihilator are after the shredder vote too. Crank it up and enjoy your thrashgasm. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

ARISE
THE RECKONING
REGAIN

Swedish metallers scuff up the template

THE kind of digitally crisp death/thrash hybrid pumped out by the Swedes isn't for everyone, especially if your tastes run to darker, more guttural music, but Arise's fourth album is mostly a cut above the usual template. It's all about programming out the dull stuff. Ignore songs such as *Blindead*, whose relentless staccato riffs and dry-throat gagging vocals are tedious, and instead make a mini-playlist out of *They Are Coming For You, Reclaiming The Soul, The Fury* and the suitably titled *Adrenaline Rush*, which focus on speedy thrills rather than being clever. Atmospherically experimental tracks such as *Pitch Black* will make for a diverting few minutes, no doubt, but stick to what Arise do best and there won't be any complaints. **[6]**

JOEL McIVER

BRANT BJORK
GODS & GODDESSES
CARGO

Ex-Kyuss drummer keeps his edge

TO HIS eternal credit, Brant Bjork still looks and sounds like he keeps a bong in every room of the house. Like former Kyuss bandmate Josh Homme, he's rarely stood still musically, although Brant doesn't go after side-projects like a drunk teenager after girls. Dabbling with punk, psychedelic and classic rock, Brant's past could be called chequered, though he is, you feel, nothing if not true to himself. His latest album opts for a tougher hard rock edge and could well have been made in the early 70s. In a good way, *Somewhere Some Woman* is a brooding, tripped-out piece of work while *Dirty Bird* makes you want to buy a second-hand Camino and scare the neighbours by performing doughnuts in their drive. **[8]**

PHIL WILDING

BLACK THOUGHTS BLEEDING
STOMACHION
SILVERWOLF

Far more than just metalcore

IT'S reassuring to know that, in 2010, a band can take the overused metalcore blueprint and still come up with something worth listening to. Rather than collect a bunch of breakdowns plastered together with one riff, these guys write *proper* songs. Sure, they need to step out of the shadow of their influences – KSE (*Bloodred Struggle*), As I Lay Dying (*Nothing Changes*), even a hint of old Throwdown (*Stomachion*) – but the potential for this quintet who only played their first gig in 2008 is huge. Can a band who show such adroit songwriting and ferocious passion on their debut be destined for greatness? We'll be listening on tenterhooks. **[7]**

ABHIJEET AHLUWALIA

BLEED FROM WITHIN
EMPIRE
RISING

Scots induce a death metal gold rush

THESE Glaswegians punched themselves into a promising starting position with their 2009 debut, *Humanity*, and the follow-up entrenches their status as a band to watch. Labelmates Trigger The Bloodshed may have a bigger, more brutal sound but there's plenty of malevolent gold to be mined from the depths of *Empire*, specifically the giant-slaying ascending riff that underpins *The Weaker One* and the thrash metal homage that introduces *Vanity*. There's a contemplative feel to songs such as *The Healing* too, revealing that BFW are a fully rounded band. Their DM chops are down, and although music as intense as this always works better live than in the studio, there's every reason for you to embrace this album. **[7]**

JOEL McIVER

CHIMP SPANNER
AT THE DREAM'S EDGE
BASICK

Tech-metal bedroom noodlefest

AN annoyingly talented individual, Paul Ortiz may be hiding behind a daft moniker, but *...Dream's Edge* has his idiosyncratic identity stamped all over it. Fans of dreamy, progressive metal will be in raptures when they immerse themselves in the guitarist's charismatic amalgam of crunching, Meshuggah-esque riffs, Devin-like ambient futurism and mindbending jazz-metal lead work. Tracks like *Galaxy Rise* and the Dream Theater-in-space splurge of *Under One Sky* strike a blissful balance between technical bravado and atmospheric restraint, resulting in a mesmerising musical trip to the stars and back. That the whole thing was probably knocked together in Paul's garden shed makes its brilliance all the more remarkable. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

DID YOU KNOW? Chino Moreno's real name is Camillo Wong Moreno.

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Reviews
ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS

Exodus bemoan the late arrival of the ice cream van

EXODUS
EXHIBIT B: THE HUMAN CONDITION
NUCLEAR BLAST

Bay Area thrashers firing on all cylinders

WHAT is going on in the American metal scene? Right now, it seems that so many of the classic thrash bands on the West Coast have been refuelled with the sort of creative energy they've been missing for the past two decades. Under the watchful gaze of producer Andy Sneap, a man who knows a thing or two about what these sort of bands should sound like, Exodus, as with the likes of veterans such as Amored Saint and Testament, have come up with what is arguably the band's best album since 1988's *Fabulous Disaster*. If their last three albums have hinted at something special about to rear up and bite us, this time the venom is in full flow. While only guitarist Gary Holt and drummer Tom Hunting remain from the early, glory days of the band, the sound on *Exhibit B* is in the classic vein, albeit with a virulent, nasty edge that comes from the modern era of metal. All of this would be irrelevant if the songs were below par, but with Gary Holt and fellow guitarist Lee Altus delivering up an avalanche of great riffery, the likes of *Hammer And Life*, *Democide* and *Good Riddance* are all lit up by a creative blaze. The sound is furious yet smooth, the vocals from Rob Dukes exorcises the ghosts of his predecessors and the whole tone of the record is upbeat in a darkly demented fashion. Gary Holt has spent the last few years telling us that Exodus were now better than they ever were. With *Exhibit B* he might well have proven himself to be right. **[8]**

MALCOLM DOME

INFLUENCED BY
METALLICA, MOTÖRHEAD, SLAYER

ALSO TRY
MACHINE HEAD
Through The Ashes Of Empires
ROADRUNNER, 2004
TESTAMENT
The Formation Of Damnation
NUCLEAR BLAST, 2008
SKELETONWITCH
Breathing The Fire
PROSTHETIC, 2009

DIVIDED MULTITUDE
GUARDIAN ANGEL
SILVERWOLF

Prog-power metallers worth the wait

IT'S been 11 years since the release of Divided Multitude's well-received debut *Inner Self*, and although the intervening years brought just 2002's *Falling To Pieces*, this new outing confirms that the Norwegian quintet have been maturing nicely. *Guardian Angel* is a further-finessed exercise in classy progressive power metal with no shortage of scope and ambition. Imbued with a subtle sense of the epic, its shifting moods and tempos keep things interesting throughout, but the heaving mass of riffs, swirling, symphonic keys and vocal gymnastics rarely threaten to overwhelm. It's a complex and challenging listen without becoming needlessly overwrought or indulging in instrumental wankery for the sake of showing off. **[7]**

GREG MOFFITT

DIVINITY
THE SINGULARITY
CANDLELIGHT

Canadian sci-fi metal mayhem

THE problem with predicting the future is that time passes so quickly that your destiny is always to be yesterday's man. Divinity adhere to a manifesto of urgent forward motion, piloting the same riff-warping space shuttle towards the final frontier that Devin Townsend, Meshuggah, Soilwork and Textures have all hijacked in the past. In fact, imagine an amalgamation of all four names and you'll have a credible grasp on what *Singularity* has to offer, but that's not to say that these Canadians have nothing of their own to impart. There is plenty of textural ingenuity, rhythmic invention and melodic flair on display during the likes of *Beg To Consume* and *Transformation*, all delivered with near-robotic precision. **[7]**

DOM LAWSON

HAG
HAG
NOISESTAR

Anglo/Swedish/Hungarian noisy bastards

HAG are a pan-European noise power trio who've settled in London and signed to Noisestar, the post-grunge/acid rock label formed by Notorious Hi Fi Killers. Part of an ever-burgeoning scene in the capital that includes Part Chimp, Hey Colossus and Dethscalator, HAG mark out their own space by keeping things brutally simple. Their churning punk sludge bears comparison to Lords, Harvey Milk and Cows, in that it sounds like it's been recorded in a shed, albeit a shed decorated with the viscera of dead postmen and Jehovah's Witnesses. This isn't to say that HAG are slouches. *Gummo Vs Mum* is worthy of the Jesus Lizard and *Tick Tack Toe* is the sort of stop/start belter you'd expect from Nomeansno. **[7]**

JOHN DORAN

HALESTORM
HALESTORM
ATLANTIC

Gilt-edged rock with a woman's touch

IF the idea of a female-fronted Nickelback fills you with revulsion, look away now. The comparison does US quartet Halestorm few favours, but their irrepressible, robust strand of modern rock is catching on like wildfire in their homeland. It doesn't exactly hurt that Lzzy Hale (sic) featured in *Revolver* magazine's recent Hottest Chicks In Metal roundup and sings of sexual gratification in the record's first single, *I Get Off*. Neither have they been hindered by a production from Grammy-nominated Howard Benson. In fact, the album steadily unshackles its more commercial overtones to gain momentum via *What Were You Expecting* and *Dirty Work*, approaching the finish line in unexpectedly hook-laden, attitude-charged style. **[5]**

DAVE LING

ALBUM THAT CHANGED MY LIFE

Tom G Warrior Triptykon

BLACK SABBATH
VOLUME 4
VERTIGO

"I didn't know such music existed before. My only friend in my youth nicked one of his sister's cassettes and lent it to me and on one side was *Volume 4*. It was so fucking heavy and dark for that time, and it spoke to me. I began learning guitar from that, so I can't overestimate its importance."

CYPRESS HILL
RISE UP
EMI

West Coast rappers get their metal on

CYPRESS Hill are back with 15 tracks featuring guest spots from beats and metalheads alike. As well as peeps like House Of Pain's Everlast are the likes of Tom Morello, Daron Malakian and Mike Shinoda. The latter offers up some sumptuous guitar for the brooding *Carry Me Away*, while Morello's cosmic riff lines the title track, a suitably bouncy slab of rap rock. He also brings that RATM sound and bounce to *Shut Em Down*. *Trouble Seeker* with Daron Malakian is an angular and uptempo rock-hop tune with screeching guitar licks and head-nod riffs that cut loose in the choruses to the signature Armenian sound made so famous by SOAD. A group who made it by not compromising are sticking to their guns. Figuratively speaking. **[7]**

GILL

GWYDION
HORN TRISKELION
AFM

Portuguese 'warriors' raising Odin's ire

THESE Portuguese Viking metallers get it wrong right from the off. Surely the Portuguese realise the historical fact that the Vikings were so unsuccessful in sacking their country was because the Moors seriously kicked Viking arse? As did the Welsh, the only British nation to have any real success in doing so. So naming your Viking metal band after a Welsh magician hardly lends further credibility to your battle metal cries. That's before we get to the music, which is mundane, ploddy Viking metal, with little authenticity to make the likes of *From Hell To Asgard* and *Far I Viking* ring with a shred of authenticity. Some scoff, but when done well, Viking metal is still a hell of a lot of fun. This is simply very silly. **[4]**

JERRY EWING

KAOS
THE PITS OF EXISTENCE
BOTTOMLESS PIT PRODUCTIONS

Bay Area brutes bring the riff

THRASH comes in many forms these days, ranging from the self-consciously retro to the defiantly new school, and when it's executed with passion, it seldom fails to hit the spot. Formed in the Bay Area in the late 80s, Kaos may not have had the same impact as many of their contemporaries but their understanding of what works is plain enough here. This is proudly in touch with the cutting edge, but with plenty of 20-year-old trace memories guiding these songs' wild spirit, not least on the vicious *Bleed Some More*, a frantic, bred-for-the-pit hybrid of Slayer and Hatebreed. A little more originality wouldn't go amiss, but Kaos ooze belief and commitment to the cause. **[6]**

DOM LAWSON

TRUE OR FALSE? Exodus and Testament once turned down overtures from Genesis to play a biblical-themed set of Israeli dates.

False. As are the rumours that it was to be called Tour-ah.

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QUICK & PAINLESS

A SHORT LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S OTHER OFFERINGS

AX
YOU'VE BEEN SO BAD
RISE ABOVE RELICS

OBSCURE even by the standards of obscure 70s rock, Lee Dorrian has dug up an awesome power trio from the middle of nowhere – Kitchener, Canada to be precise. Soulful proto-metal for fans of Bang!, Blue Cheer and Sir Lord Baltimore. **[7]**

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

THE GLITTERATI
ARE YOU ONE OF US?
GLOBAL MUSIC

IT has taken The Glitterati the best part of five years to release their second album, but the reasons for its delay remain vague. Like their Atlantic label predecessor, it stutters and swaggers, but it feels like their fire's gone out no matter how hard they try to ape their heroes, The Wildhearts. **[5]**

PHILIP WILDING

KARMA COWBOYS
SHAKE IT!
TARGET

SCREAMING 'AC/DC meets Led Zeppelin' on the cover merely prompts fears these Danes are desperately trying to jump on the Airbourne bandwagon. *Shake It!* has its moments, but still it's still derivative and destined never to outgrow the club scene. **[6]**

JERRY EWING

KATATONIA
THE LONGEST YEAR
PEACEVILLE

LEAD by a song so luxurious it should feature on an M&S food advert, this EP offers a few more facets to Katatonia's lambent, ruminative grace as well as two promo vids. *Sold Heart* glistens with even more languid splendour, whilst a remix of *Day And Then The Shade* adds rich electronic pulses to exhilarating effect. **[8]**

JONATHAN SELZER

This month in history...

JUNE 1994

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
PURPLE
EAST WEST

SO what if STP come across with an AIC/Pearl Jam vibe? It's better than sounding woefully outmoded, like Manowar. The band's second album is broader and more dynamic than their debut. In short, it's a belter of an album, and one which will overshadow all but the best of the rest of this year's releases. **[4.5/5]**

PAUL HENDERSON

KIUAS
LUSTDRIVEN
SPINEFARM

Cinematic heaviness from Finland

THESE folk metalheads have outdone themselves with this, their fourth and most ambitious album. Their music retains its power metal foundation, but producer Janne Joutsenniemi has encouraged the five-piece to introduce sweeping orchestral arrangements without sacrificing heaviness. Bursting out of the speakers like a missing track from the *Lord Of The Rings* soundtrack, *The Visionary* is the perfect accompaniment to beheading orcs. Ilja Jalkanen nearly sings out his skin, while Mikko Salovaara flits between bloodthirsty riffs (*Kiuassault* and *Aftermath*) and beautiful acoustic guitar (the rustic *Summer's End*). Lacking a duff track, *Lustdriven* is a heroic effort from a band who have taken the biggest artistic leap of their career. **[8]**

DAVE LING

KIVIMETSÄN DRUIDI
BETRAYAL, JUSTICE, REVENGE
CENTURY MEDIA

Full-force Finnish fantasy metal

THE Finns really do know how to create quality metal and Kivimetsän Druidi are no exception. Their second full-length manages to be both fierce and beautiful, mixing galloping rhythms with folk elements, topped off with an aggressive edge. Nightwish comparisons will flood in; Leeni-Maria's delicate classical female vocals contrasted with Joni's growls will pitch them against their fellow Finns' *Wishmaster* period, yet KD are more than just another symphonic metal band. *The Seawitch And The Sorceror* is a particular highlight, knitting together a whole melting pot of styles into one stunning song. BM, thrash and more – *Betrayal, Justice, Revenge* is a giant cauldron of influences, all carefully combined across nine excellent tracks. **[7]**

NATASHA SCHARF

LAIR OF THE MINOTAUR
EVIL POWER
GRINDHOUSE/SOUTHERN LORD

Blood-thirsty trio sharpen their blades

WAR Metal Battle Master, the last album by this Chicago trio, was a rather bland collection of songs come from the maw of a band of unashamed metal elitists. Perhaps it was self-realisation that lit a fire under their asses, but *Evil Power* ramps up the hate, rage, distorted bass, pounding drums and Steve Rathbone's scathing baritone in a speaker-shredding combination of Celtic Frost, Discharge, Exciter and sloppy South American thrash that screams impaled hearts and battle-ready soul. Songs like *Let's Kill These Motherfuckers* and *Riders Of The Skullhammer, We Ride The Night* are too-the-fucking-point brief, feature appropriate lyrical ire and are the perfect musical accompaniment to cooking wild game over an open fire. **[8]**

CONNIE GORDON

LOWER HELL
HELLEVATOR
BASTARDIZED

Eclectic Germans turn up the heat

THIS positive German five-piece hide the best tracks on the second half of this album but, assuming you like quick double-bass drumming and a touch of Swedish influence, the journey's still rewarding. Where earlier tracks verge on jazzy mathcore and early Trivium, the rest of the album juggles death, thrash and uplifting, unashamed guitar solos with satisfying brutality. As *Hellevator* progresses, we're rewarded with more textured vocals and guitars with a clever mind of their own. Six-minute epic *Tonight I'm Coming Home* strays from into more purposeful moments of calm and the title track adds a military feel to the pretty work of strings and a piano. It takes some time to bond with, but *Hellevator* is worth it. **[7]**

NIK YOUNG

NEVERLAND
OPHIDIA
AFM

Mediterranean-flavoured power metal

ON first listen, the scale of *Ophidia* is hard to take in. These Greek-Turkish metallers' second album is a grandiose mish-mash of progressive, symphonic and gothic elements that fuses female singer Iris Mavraki's classical heritage with the hard-hitting eclecticism of such groups as Blind Guardian and Angra. Indeed, it's no surprise that the latter's singer Eddo Falschi joins former Savatage frontman Jon Oliva among the special guests. Although the torrents of tightly knitted guitar, swathes of overbearing panoramic sound and fantasy-themed interplay between Mavraki and co-vocalist Oganalp Canatan are engaging, as the album progresses the sheer mundanity of songs like *Speak To Me* and *Final Odyssey* diminish a little of the album's lustre. **[6]**

DAVE LING

Judas Priest: Hell bent for re-issues

JUDAS PRIEST
RE-ISSUES
SONY/BACK ON BLACK

Brummie metal legends polish their steel

IT'S steel three ways to celebrate the 30th anniversary of one of metal's most iconic albums. *British Steel: Legacy Edition* **[9]** offers a bumper triple-disc package that once again rams home the brilliance of Priest's breakthrough release. Just when you think they can't improve the sonics any further, disc one features the original album digitally remastered, unleashing a previously unheard level of clarity and crispness. The bass – buried by guitars on most Priest albums – particularly benefits from the process and overall this shiny new makeover reminds us what a great job producer Tom Allom actually did all those years ago. Disc two features a full live show including *British Steel* performed in its entirety for the first time. Culled from the band's 2009 US tour, it's the leanest and meanest they've sounded for years. Ditto disc three, a DVD which brings the same show to the big screen, complete with acres of studded leather, the ubiquitous Harley and one extremely chuffed-looking band. Throw in a 'making-of' documentary and you have the ultimate version of a timeless classic. The bulk of the band's 1970s catalogue has also undergone a revamp, this time on vinyl. *Sin After Sin* **[8]**, *Stained Class* **[8]**, *Killing Machine* **[8]** and *Unleashed In The East* **[8]** are all available as deluxe 180g limited-edition, coloured vinyl pressings with plush gatefold sleeves and various bonus tracks. An aesthetically pleasing way to revisit Judas Priest's roots.

GREG MOFFITT

INFLUENCED
SAXON, SLAYER, ICED EARTH

ALSO TRY

SAXON
Wheels Of Steel (Special Edition)
EMI, 2009

ICED EARTH
Something Wicked This Way Comes
CENTURY MEDIA, 2008

IRON MAIDEN
Eddie's Archive
EMI, 2002

DID YOU KNOW? Judas Priest got their name from the Bob Dylan song, *The Ballad Of Frankie Lee And Judas Priest.*

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Reviews
ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS

Moving forward, but not forgetting their roots

SOULFLY
OMEN
ROADRUNNER

Restlessness begets restlessness

OVER 25 years into his musical career, Max Cavalera still refuses to rest on his laurels, the Soulfly of *Omen* being an entirely different beast to the one that produced the eponymous debut 12 years ago. That is testament to the frontman's desire to progress while still keeping alive the invigorating glories of yesteryear, characterised as the furious blackened punk rock whirlwind of opener *Bloodbath & Beyond* heralds Max's most varied output to date. Co-conspirator Mark Rizzo has become more of a force on each album since joining the ranks in 2004, and delivers some tantalising lead work on the primitive *Counter Sabotage*, Megadeth flourishes on *Mega-Doom*, and a Maiden gallop on *Kingdom*, all crowned by the no-nonsense lyrics and distinctive growl of the metal Bob Marley. Though belligerent and unsettling *Off With Their Heads* and thunderous *Vulture Culture* will have old-school Sepultura fans foaming, *Omen* still falls short of the spine-tingling thrash dynamics that characterised the last two efforts, *Dark Days* and *Conquer*. Not even a stunning turn from Dillinger's Greg Puciato can lift the electronic-laden *Rise Of The Fallen* above a mid-paced chug, while Prong's Tommy Victor gets bogged down in *Lethal Injection*. After the stodgy *Great Depression* and *Jeffrey Dahmer*, you wonder how many of these could muscle their way into the band's already-crowded live setlist, and what aces Max is holding onto for the next Cavalera Conspiracy album. **[7]**

ADAM REES

INFLUENCED BY
DEAD KENNEDYS, IRON MAIDEN, DARKTHRONE

ALSO TRY
DEVILDRIVER
Pray For Villains
ROADRUNNER, 2009
MACHINE HEAD
The More Things Change
ROADRUNNER, 1996
MEGADETH
United Abominations
ROADRUNNER, 2007

RATT
INFESTATION
ROADRUNNER

West Coast rockers give up the cheese

THOSE who know no better consider Ratt a cheesy hair metal band, unimportant unless a joke needs a butt. Ratt started in the 70s and helped build the hair metal scene that birthed Mötley Crüe and W.A.S.P., fusing NWOBHM with US rock – Maiden with Aerosmith. Not only were they innovators but great songwriters and solid performers. 2010 sees them return after 11 years, and with a stack of hard rock anthems. While Def Leppard and Tesla turn in tired and over-produced records, Ratt have conjured up a youthful, energetic and biting album: great songs, swaggering riffs and frontman Stephen Pearcy's signature sneer and snarl. More Guns N' Roses than Poison, Ratt are here to rock, not rot. **[8]**

GILL

RED SPAROWES
THE FEAR IS EXCRUCIATING, BUT THEREIN LIES THE ANSWER
SARGENT HOUSE

Post-rock poster boys take flight

RED Sparowes align themselves more with the 'post' part of the post-metal/rock description. Their sound is awash with expansive progressions and instrumental tension/release not unlike a more angular version of guitarist Cliff Meyer's Isis day job. Add the heart-wrench of Greg Burns' lap steel and you have a winning, beard-stroking combo. *The Fear...* plays up their spacey inspirations. Reverb, echo and chorus pedals are stomped on like they owe money on *Giving Birth To Imagined Saviors* and *A Hail of Bombs* deftly balances the fine quiet/loud line without sounding forced. There are a few moments where the riffing lacks definitive identity, but when they're on, like *A Mutiny*'s shimmery retro feel, they're on. **[7]**

CONNIE GORDON

RHAPSODY OF FIRE
THE FROZEN TEARS OF ANGELS
NUCLEAR BLAST

Power metal magi know no bounds

WITH more pomp than the last night of the Proms, Rhapsody Of Fire have two settings: full-on and full-on and then some. Their fantastical, rapid-fire approach comes wrapped up in strands of classical music and is underscored by a love of cinema soundtracks, though they clearly watch films that are more Michael Bay than they are Ingmar Bergman. Past albums have sung of enchanted lands and the wizard's dream and they even once drafted in Christopher Lee to narrate on one of their records. Their latest album is as subtle as the title implies; magical kingdoms are fêted to fall unless a hero can be found and it's all set, pleasingly, against eight unrelenting and equally thunderous themes. **[7]**

PHILIP WILDING

ROLO TOMASSI
COSMOLOGY
HASSLE

Barely letting up for a second

WHEN it comes to sophomore albums, for every *Led Zep II* and *Iowa*, there is a slew of *Evil Empire*s and *One Way Ticket To Hell...*s. Clearly, Rolo Tomassi have never heard of the 'sophomore slump', conspiring to produce their finest work to date. Right from opener *Katzenklavier*'s eerie keyboard strains (which no longer sound as if they've been pilfered from *Donkey Kong*), it's clear that the band have matured rapidly since 2008's *Hysterics*. *Unromance* unveils Eva Spence's surprisingly cultured singing voice whilst the bass thump of *French Motel* hits like an osmium rhino. Although on occasion youthful impetuousness reigns in some ideas before they've been properly developed, this is already one of the highlights of 2010. **[8]**

TOBY COOK

LAST RECORD I BOUGHT

Toni Iommi Heaven & Hell

CHRISTOPHER LEE
CHARLEMAGNE: BY THE SWORDS AND THE CROSS
CADIZ

"*BY The Swords And The Cross* is very good for the stuff it is. It's just like going to watch something at the cinema or at the theatre. Musically it's very, very good and there's so much presence in that voice, it's so deep. Very baritone. Great record."

RAINTIME
PSYCHROMATIC
LIFEFORCE

A modern take on power metal

THIS third album from Italian quintet Raintime combines a set of well-written tunes with a jaunty, vibrant sound mix from former Machine Head/Soulfly man Logan Mader. With its clean vocals, precision-drilled scything guitar and pulsating, key-enhanced beat, opener *Fire Ants* sets the scene brilliantly, coming on like latter-day In Flames jamming with Bodom. It's the first of a handful of tracks that deserve dancefloor-filler status, including *Nothing But A Mistake*, which sees Claudio Coassin alternating between snarls and a more harmony-conscious delivery. If Raintime tread water with a couple of throw-away tunes towards the end – such as the inconsequential *Beaten Roads* and *One Day* – it's disappointing, but forgivable. **[7]**

DAVE LING

RESISTANCE
LORDS OF TORMENT
ALVERAN

Yobcore crunch from Belgium

RED-FACED aggression and one-dimensional bluster is something the Belgians do better than most, as frequently proved by the countless metallic hardcore bands they produce. Resistance certainly exhibit these native traces, but theirs is a more contemporary strain of deathcore that bears more than a passing resemblance to Despised Icon. In truth, for all their breakdowns and frantic blasting, this lot seem particularly skilled in evoking old-school DM vibes via the use of slower, more ominous riffs. The result is an enjoyably fresh take on a well-worn formula that works best on opener *Requiem* and the Skinless-like title track. Unfortunately, too many detours down Generic Street mean that *Lords...* promises far more than is actually delivered. **[6]**

DOM LAWSON

RUINED SOUL
MY DYING DAY
SUICIDE

Guest-laden melodic metal from Go'burg

THIS Gothenburg project is currently just one man: Johnny Johansson, who's brought in various guests to augment his vision. Members of Wolf, Scar Symmetry, Stratovarius and Nightrage all lend a hand, or a throat. What you get is a very decent album, clearly influenced by the famed Gothenburg sound, yet with an approach that's closer to Trivium. The songs are melodic yet intense, with vocals veering wildly from the growl to the smooth. What this lacks is an outstanding moment to knock you back. Every song starts promisingly, but never takes off, with *My Dying Day* and *Rivers Of Blood* arguably the pick, mainly because they're right at the start when it's all still fresh. Once Ruined Soul have a proper lineup, this could develop. **[6]**

MALCOLM DOME

TRUE OR FALSE? Max Cavelera's father, Graziano, was the Italian ambassador to Brazil.

True. Although Cavelera Sr passed away when Max was only nine.

More at ebook-free-download.net or magazinesdownload.com

QUICK & PAINLESS

A SHORT LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S OTHER OFFERINGS

NECROMANDUS
OREXIS OF DEATH
RISE ABOVE RELICS

CHAMPIONED by Black Sabbath guitarist Tony Iommi, who guests on this, their sole album, Cumbria's Necromandus were sadly doomed to obscurity. Recorded in 1973 but then indefinitely shelved, this engaging collection of progressive heavy rock workouts at last gets the treatment it deserves, with bonus live tracks. **[7]**

GREG MOFFITT

NEMBIENCE
THROUGH TIMES OF DESPAIR
CASKET

NO matter how many bands suckle from the At The Gates legacy, there will always be a place for the likes of Nembience. Metalcore may have been exhibited better, but few could argue with the ruthless efficiency on display through the likes of *Visions Of Decay* and *Towards Extinction*. **[7]**

ADAM REES

THE QUIREBOYS
HALFPENNY DANCER
HECTICK

ACOUSTIC albums might not be everyone's cup of tea. But in the hands of the Quireboys, then a mix of reworkings of classic hits, and some great covers – including UFO's *Love To Love* and Leo Sayer's *I Can't Stop Loving You* – turn this into one of the best albums of its kind you'll hear all year. **[8]**

JERRY EWING

THE SMOKING HEARTS
PRIDE OF NOWHERE
GSR

HAVING played with everyone from Gallows to Skid Row, The Smoking Hearts are a sublime mixture of nut-dropping punk fury and fret-fucking, amp-humping, Jäger-shootin, rock'n'roll hell-raisin' raucousness. With more sex than a local knocking shop, The Smoking Hearts are ones to watch. **[8]**

TERRY BEZER

This month in history...

JUNE 2003

HAMMER VISITS CRISTINA'S GAFF!

LACUNA Coil singer Cristina Scabbia invited us to the pad she shared with then-boyfriend Marco Coti Zelati, the band's bassist, in the Milan suburb of Quarto Oggiaro. The delightful Cristina cooked dinner for our correspondent, who trawled through her bedroom, finding a disco glitter ball, a kinky whip and a penis-shaped pasta necklace. Ooo-eer, missus!

SABATON
COAT OF ARMS
NUCLEAR BLAST

Pure heavy metal, Swedish style!

AFTER almost a decade of delivering the goods, you know what to expect from a Sabaton record. These Swedes consistently fly the banner for old-school leather'n'studs traditionalism, and now, at the sixth time of asking, with their brand of music in vogue at last, it's time for Sabaton to claim their dues. With warfare as its theme, *Coat Of Arms* embraces just about every lyrical cliché you could think of, each anthem delivered via a battery of pummelling drums from Daniel Mullback, the covering fire of twin-guitarists Rickard Sundén and Oskar Montelius a delight. Closing with the tongue-in-cheek *Metal Ripper*, which offers praise to Ozzy, Priest, AC/DC and more, Sabaton confirm that they are in on the joke – phew! **[8]**

DAVE LING

SCHIZO
HALLUCINATION CRAMPS
SCARLET

Italian thrash veterans stay the pace

ACCORDING to Ghandi, 'There is more to life than increasing its speed'. No one seems to have told Schizo this though, and thank Jesus amphetamine-munching Christ they didn't. After a career spanning over 25 years, many thrash acts would be tempted to slow the pace and start fannying about with orchestras and covers of old folk songs. Not Schizo. A concept album based around mental illness, *Hallucination Cramps* finds the Italians expulsing a level of sonic velocity that could induce RSI merely by listening to it. Thrash being thrash, there are plenty of Exodus and Slayer-like moments, but by the time *Spiritual Cancer* kicks in, you won't care. Sometimes Italians really do do it better. **[7]**

TOBY COOK

SCORPIONS
STING IN THE TAIL
SONY

German rock legends bid Auf Wiedersehen

WHEN the Scorpions jumped the shark is open to debate – their post-*Crazy World* albums throughout the 90s have been all but redundant. But jump they did, all but ruining what had been a glittering career. So it's a measure of their return to form that, over 40 years down the line, they bid us farewell and it's sad to see the Teutonic titans pass. From the opening riff that playfully toys with their heritage, the old boys do their legacy proud. Sure, the ballads are cack, but the remainder is tight, melodic and ballsy. This is heavy metal as it was back in the 80s, when big riffs ruled the world. Listen to this album building their famed human pyramid with your mates. And quietly shed a tear. **[8]**

JERRY EWING

SICK OF IT ALL
BASED ON A TRUE STORY
CENTURY MEDIA

NYHC crew step up the quality control

IT'S been over 24 years since this Queens, New York-based crew appeared on the scene, and this new release does everything to reinforce the fact these guys are still the epitome of NYHC. That positive fist-pumping attitude and those hefty chugging riffs are back and frontman Lou Koller's bark is as red raw as ever, only this time SOIA have massively stepped it up as far as memorable songwriting goes. *Lowest Common Denominator*, *Lifeline* and the 'woah-oh'-fuelled *A Month Of Sundays* represent the catchy corner, while *Death To Tyrants* producer Tue Madsen returns to add a determined bite to pit-killers *As Long As She's Standing* and *Nobody Rules*. Why change excellence when you can simply polish it? **[8]**

NIK YOUNG

SOLUTION.45
FOR AEONS PAST
AFM

Supergroup Swedes stumble at the first

WITH current and ex-members of Miseration and Scar Symmetry in their ranks, Sweden's Solution.45 exhibit a more prog-tinged take on the melodic DM path. At its best this debut delivers hulking, In Flames-style guitar lines, backed up by lashings of keyboards with grand, cleanly sung choruses and throaty growls. But despite the pristine production, it soon becomes apparent that S.45 suffer from an inability to summon any riffs that haven't been done better elsewhere. The brooding *Into Shadow* and the ambitious balladry of *Lethean Tears* aside, there are depressingly very few highlights as the majority of the overblown choruses float away into the aether leaving little more than a scratch. *For Aeons Past* is distinctly average at best. **[6]**

ADAM REES

"So how many copies do we need to flog for a downpayment on this place?"

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
STONE TEMPLE PILOTS
ATLANTIC

Post-grunge heroes return in fine form

IN parts of the USA, Stone Temple Pilots' reformation and subsequent reports of a new record have been received like the news that a UFO landed in Times Square and Jesus got out. Post-grunge they may have been – STP had all the trappings of Seattle's fuzzy sound – but being California-based, they also boasted a keener pop edge and better teeth. Cleverly, they jumped off grunge's bandwagon before it crashed and developed a hard rock edge, a ragged, somewhat deranged feel (mainly bound up in the unfettered behaviour of singer Scott Weiland who checked into rehab clinics the way some of us pop to the shops) and a psychedelic spangle that helped them sell the better part of 40million records. Not bad for a band whose name most people know because the singer was thought to be the new Axl Rose. Cleverly, STP have managed to make a very good, sometimes almost great album as their latest calling card. Scott wears his Bowie fetish on his sleeve for better (*First Kiss On Mars*) and worse (*Hickory Dichotomy*). He even offers a nod to his once-wayward behaviour and the band's musical past in *Between The Lines* with the looping refrain *'Even when we used to take drugs'* and a Cobain-like yelp. For their part, the band play splashes of pop-rock that ring brilliantly true on the lingering *Maver*, the sparkling *Cinnamon* and the rangy, loose-limbed strut of *Huckleberry Crumble*. **[7]**

PHILIP WILDING

INFLUENCED BY
DAVID BOWIE, THE DOORS, THE BEATLES

ALSO TRY
ENUFF Z'NUFF
Strength
ATCO, 1991
SMASHING PUMPKINS
Siamese Dream
VIRGIN, 1993
AEROSMITH
Pump
GEFFEN, 1989

DID YOU KNOW? Scott Weiland is writing an autobiography entitled *Not Dead & Not For Sale*, due out in November this year.

More at ebook-free-download.net or magazinesdownload.com

Reviews
ALL THE SINNERS AND WINNERS

Sod the Queen's Speech; *this* makes us patriotic

TRIGGER THE BLOODSHED
DEGENERATE
RISING

UK deathsters join the premier division

YOU may find yourself wondering if our fair and sceptr'd isle will ever compete when it comes to death metal – the proper stuff, music that makes you want to wrestle oxen to the ground while lesser mortals fill their drawers with fear. Wonder no longer; in terms of sonic misanthropy, this monstrous third album from Bath's Trigger The Bloodshed has every right to stand alongside the likes of Cannibal Corpse, Behemoth and Nile on the world stage. Those bands rose to the top of their game because they combined unique ideas about extreme metal with jaw-dropping musicianship, and attained utterly compelling levels of violence – all criteria that can be applied to *Degenerate*. The most gratifying aspect of this album is its dynamics: you immediately sense that, had they wished, TTB could have delivered songs composed solely of numbingly fast blasts just to satisfy the pit. Instead, there's light and shade in songs such as *A Vision Showing Nothing* and *Dead Vein* that reveals the band's growth as songwriters. It's very clear that TTB are equally capable of stuffing 20 riffs into a song and settling into a groove of huge dimensions. As such, *Degenerate* supplies equal amounts of extremity and restraint, and is a truly mature work as a result. Just seeing a British band competing with such mesmerising ferocity is its own reward: it's enough to make you doff your cap and salute the Union Jack. **[8]**

JOEL McIVER

INFLUENCED BY
DECAPITATED, INSISION, NAPALM DEATH

ALSO TRY
WHITECHAPEL
A New Era Of Corruption
METAL BLADE, 2010
THE BERZERKER
Dissimulate
EARACHE, 2002
JOB FOR A COWBOY
Ruination
METAL BLADE, 2009

STIGMA
CONCERTO FOR THE UNDEAD
PIVOTAL

Paddling in a puddle of horror

THIS mildly amusing schlock-horror-themed album from the Italian quartet Stigma is deeply mediocre, offering up melodic DM with shouted hardcore choruses and politely fast tempos without ever distinguishing itself from the lumpen mass of Euro-pudding metal. The songs are about as threatening as tiramisu, despite the shriek/bellow vocal interplay, although if you were forced to come up with a positive angle you might point to the zippy shredding. Songtitles such as *What About A Terror Ride?* and *Doctor Skeleton* should be enough to let you know what Stigma's interests are, but without even a whiff of originality, the only people who will enjoy this album will be the most undemanding fans of *Tales From The Crypt*. **[5]**

JOEL McIVER

SVARTSOT
MULMETS VISER
NAPALM

Folk metal with a Danish twist

SOUNDING like the bearded bastard offspring of Turisas and Amon Amarth raises the question of whether one should take Svartsot seriously. Jaunty jigs, played with authentic folk instruments, are mixed with melodic DM and death grunts; the band's second opus certainly lives up to the 'Songs Of Darkness' it translates to. Like their Finnish neighbours Korpiklaani, Svartsot's songs are drenched in local folklore as well as alcohol. Preferring the more sedate costume of pirate shirts and leathers rather than skins and warpaint, the sextet's battlecry manages to be both aggressive and – with its sing-song whistles – uplifting at the same time. *Mulmets Viser* is a Danish swirl of styles that teases the palate in the most delectable way. **[7]**

NATASHA SCHARF

TAROT
GRAVITY OF LIGHT
NUCLEAR BLAST

Nightwish bassist turns back the clock

ALTHOUGH a mere droplet in the tidal wave of classic metal currently crashing coast to coast worldwide, Finland's Tarot certainly can't be accused of bandwagon jumping. Their debut album, *Spell Of Iron*, dropped way back in 1986 and they stuck to their guns throughout the 90s when bands toting extended guitar solos and crotch-grabbing vocals were run out of town like lepers. Much of the interest surrounding their eighth effort is undoubtedly down to the fact that vocalist/bassist Marco Hietala is he of Nightwish fame. Indeed, Tarot were effectively on ice until Marco joined Nightwish in 2002. Displaying a taste for the epic, *Gravity Of Light* will appeal to fans of anything Ronnie James Dio ever put his name to. **[7]**

GREG MOFFITT

VIRGIN SNATCH
ACT OF GRACE
MYSTIC PRODUCTION

Thrashers aim for Pole position

THIS Polish thrash quintet sure know how to grab your attention from the off, but while there is something amusing about their name, there is certainly nothing funny about their death metal-tainted thrash. Although *Act Of Grace* could best be likened to Exodus's Paul Baloff hurling Machine Head LPs at At The Gates across a lake of sulphur, dense, brutal thrash, with knowingly indulgent wah-wah destroying solos is, after all, brutal, dense thrash with... well, you get the picture. At times *Acts...* suffers from decidedly muddy production, and it's hardly smashing through any iron curtains of genre boundaries, but they've titled a track *Horn Of Plenty*, and that's got to be dirty too, hasn't it!? **[6]**

TOBY COOK

STILL ON THE STEREO

CANCER BATS
BEARS, MAYORS, SCRAPS AND BONES
HASSLE

A BAND who already had our ear came back to deliver one of the best albums of the year. A furious unity of hardcore and metal collides in foot-stomping head-nodding anthemia: frenetic riffing, shout-along choruses, leaden dirge, breakneck speed and a vast array of guitar tones and voices. It always finishes too soon.

STEELWING
LORD OF THE WASTELAND
NUCLEAR BLAST

Youngsters graduate from the old-school

FROM the font of inspiration and dodgy wardrobe ideas that is post-apocalyptic fiction arises Sweden's latest addition to the 'proper' metal pile. Housed in a tasty *Terminator*-meets-*Mad Max*-type sleeve rendered by the legendary Ed Repka, Steelwing even pinch a few lines of cult movie dialogue for their lyrics. The blood'n'guts of early Maiden is their main reference point and on numbers such as *The Illusion*, *Point Of Singularity* and, well, pretty much everything really, they filch from Maiden's first two albums, albeit to excellent effect. Talented, energetic and keen students of history, this is a feisty first foray into true metal's gladiatorial testing ground for a band who probably still get asked for their ID at the off licence. **[7]**

GREG MOFFITT

SYN:DROM
WITH FLESH UNBOUND
VICI SOLUM

Swedish metallers dying a death

IT'S an age-old conundrum: how do you incorporate influences while still creating a unique and recognisable sound? Swedes Syn:Drom are very obviously influenced by the likes of Nile and Hate Eternal, but good luck trying to tell them apart from the flood of death metallers out there today. It's not that they are bad, with their metronomic drumming, Cookie Monster vocals and downtuned guitars, but the tinny production doesn't help their cause one bit. But how many times have we heard this already? As they seamlessly blend into a characterless, one-dimensional, monotonous mush, you'll struggle to even tell these 10 tracks apart, let alone distinguish the album as a whole from another band's work. **[4]**

ABHIJEET AHLUWALIA

WULFGAR
MIDGARDIAN METAL
TROLLZORN

Direct from the Viking cloning labs

ON their 2007 debut, *With Gods And Legends Unite*, Wulfgar left a calling card as *the* go-to act for promoters should Amon Amarth perish in battle. *Midgardian Metal*, sadly, offers nothing new. Although the Swedes' epic, melodic Viking DM has all the burning, looting and fermentation of honey you could ask for, it's a weaker, thinner, paler and altogether less stirring Norse adventure. *Circle Of Runes*, *The Death Of Yggdrasil*, *The Three Norns*... they've borrowed all the right library books but to no avail. Vocalist Emil Augustsson does his best Johan Hegg impression and the band occasionally manage to muster a thundering, mid-paced chug worthy of the denizens of Valhalla. Ultimately, however, it's a bargain-basement clone. **[5]**

GREG MOFFITT

REVIEWED NEXT MONTH... AS I LAY DYING/BLACK SABBATH/THE HAUNTED

Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding reckon the number of the beast, for it is the number of a decent album; and it is a review-score above six.

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SLASHERAMA

Jude Law tries to steam iron his own testicles in mid-air

RELICS FROM THE WRECKAGE

FILMS

BY KAT HALSTEAD

REPO MEN

CERT: 18
IN CINEMAS NOW

WITH this down'n'dirty sci-fi actioner, debut director Miguel Sapochnik unleashes a dystopian future world of violence and excess. Jude Law is Remy, a Repo Man – an agent of The Union (manufacturers and lenders of artificial organs) who must reclaim borrowed parts from the public if they can't keep up their payments. It's a gory job that he performs with little conscience until an accident at work leaves him the unhappy owner of a shiny Union heart. Unable to pay for his temporary ticker, Remy goes on the run from his own (including partner Jake – Forrest Whitaker) in a derivative but enjoyable offering implanted with plenty of splatter gore and injected with a touch of knowing humour. Ace. **[7]**

And the other nun says, "Yes it does, doesn't it?" Ahahahaha!"

Dentistry isn't *all* fun and games

REC 2

CERT: 18
IN CINEMAS MAY 28

OPENING where the first *Rec* left off (with its audience nauseous, sweaty-palmed, and on the verge of breakdown) *Rec 2* forces us back into the quarantined building filled with zombie-like blood-spurters to find out what's really going down. This time it's a group of soldiers, a health official and the customary unseen cameraman that shuffle through the murky, shaky-cam world on the hunt for the original blood to fashion an antidote. A terrifying sequel to the 2007 Spanish thriller, this is *The Blair Witch Project* meets *The Exorcist* meets *Diary Of The Dead*, with another shock ending that leaves the franchise's jugular wide open for a *Rec 3*. **[8]**

The queue for festival pottage was getting lairy

BLACK DEATH

CERT: 15
IN CINEMAS MAY 28

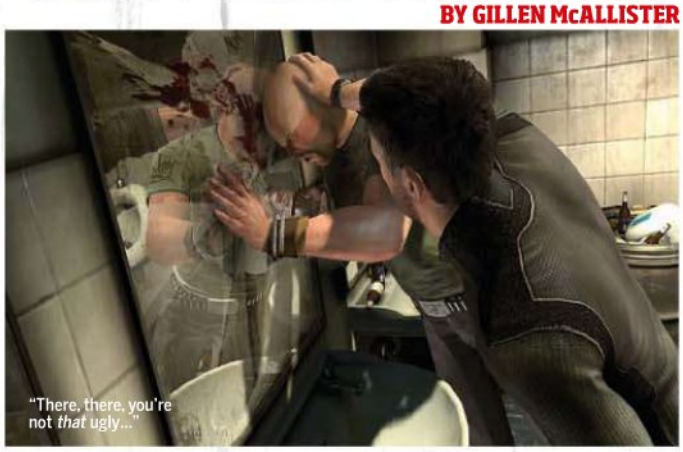
THE latest offering from horror ace Christopher Smith (*Creep, Severance, Triangle*) is set in a pestilence-filled medieval England, where monks, knights, priests and even cheeky peasant girls are getting all apocalyptic about the first outbreak of bubonic plague. Luckily there's a creepy (but hot) necromancer (Carice Van Houten) on hand with the sense to make a pact with the 'dark forces' and bring the poor pustule-popping bastards back to life. But that's not where her powers end, and soon Osmand The Monk is torn between his love of God, a young woman, and the seductive temptation of the Devil-wench in this gritty medieval horror. **[6]**

COMING UP: A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (MAY 7), ROBIN HOOD (MAY 14), PRINCE OF PERSIA (MAY 28), THE A-TEAM (JULY 30), THE LAST AIRBENDER (AUG 13)

ALL THE BEST DIGITAL PLAYGROUNDS THIS MONTH!

GAMES

BY GILLEN McALLISTER



"There, there, you're not *that* ugly..."

TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL: CONVICTION

UBISOFT
XBOX 360/PC

SAM Fisher has a brutal directness in interrogations that generally involves bludgeoning informants against the surrounding scenery. His no-bullshit approach tells of a man with little patience as he seeks his daughter's killers. It exemplifies the new streamlined *Splinter Cell* experience as a whole – fewer slow-burn stealth stakeouts, more fast-paced stealth assaults, chaining enemy takedowns as quickly and efficiently as possible. While *Splinter Cell* began as a politically charged Tom Clancy thriller, *Conviction* leans more towards a latter-day series of *24*, all setpieces and bravado, with a new-found accessibility even if some may find it a little dumbed-down. The single-player is relatively short, but the package benefits from a separate co-operative campaign that is arguably the title's highlight. **[7]**

LOST PLANET 2

CAPCOM
XBOX 360/PS3

TREMORS, *Clash Of The Titans*, *The Host*: three flicks that proved if you're going to tackle hulking beasts that'd sooner use you as a toothpick, you'd better have the backing of some solid comrades who will stand by your side. Capcom's return to the futuristic alien world of EDN III jettisons the emphasis on a narrative-driven single-player affair for a four-player co-op campaign that spans the entire planet and focuses on teamwork to take down massive Akrid bosses. Flying solo can feel soulless, so make sure you bring mates onboard for the definitive experience. **[8]**

"I *told* you not to overfeed the tadpoles!"

"Damn those cheap builders!"

SPLIT/SECOND

DISNEY
XBOX 360/PS3/PC

NOW this is the kind of reality TV show that'd be worth sitting in for on a Saturday night. Riffing on both the movie *Death Race* and Criterion's excellent *Burnout* franchise, this has you racing sleek sports cars through the likes of airports and shipyards as part of a fictional television show. Dangerous driving and drifting will build up an on-screen meter that, once activated, will trigger environmental explosions around the racecourse, collapsing buildings onto the track to eliminate your competitors. It's an interesting twist on the arcade racer genre and worth trying out. **[7]**

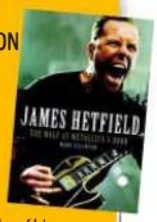
COOL SHIT

FULL METAL JACKIE CERTIFIED

JACKIE KAJZER
COURSE TECHNOLOGY PTR

TELLING the tales behind the greatest tunes of the 80s, this tome is packed with insights from from Priest, Pantera, AC/DC Megadeth and more. *Full Metal Jackie* radio DJ Jackie and co-scribe Roger Lotring have compiled the ultimate playlist of the damned and have gone into fascinating detail. A must-have addition to any self-respecting metalhead's library.

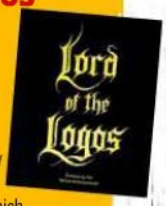
JAMES HETFIELD: THE WOLF AT METALLICA'S DOOR



MARK EGLINTON
IMP

FEATURING interviews with friends and colleagues of the mighty Het, Mark Eglinton reveals much of the psyche of his famously introspective subject, with topics of guns, booze and Christian Science all deftly handled.

LORD OF THE LOGOS



CHRISTOPHE EXPAJDEL
GESTALTEN

AS intricate as snowflakes, the extreme metal logo is seemingly as infinite in form, many of which have been gathered in this gorgeous faux-leather tome. Peppered with photos of the natural forms that inspired the author, this is as mesmerising as a biologist's handbook.

SLÁINE: DEMON KILLER

PAT MILLS, GLENN FABRY & OTHERS
2000AD BOOKS

LIKE a celtic, stupendously gory *Avatar*, our warrior king finds himself joining Queen Boudicca to defend sacred sites against invading gold-hungry Romans and a wily, ruthless blue demon. Amidst bulging muscles and countless flying body parts, Mill's exposé of the brutality of warfare rings loud and livid.

NEXT MONTH...

ROBIN HOOD/RED DEAD REDEMPTION/ALAN WAKE/PRINCE OF PERSIA: THE FORGOTTEN SANDS/CORPSEPAINT FINE ART NUDES/CAPTAIN AMERICA: REBORN AND MORE!

More at ebook-free-download.net or magazinesdownload.com

METAL DETECTOR

GETTING THE KNOWLEDGE

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

STONE TEMPLE PILOTS started as the most hated band on the grunge bandwagon but went on to sell 10 million-plus albums! Now they're back to silence the critics again. Words: Ryan Bird.

After meeting at a Black Flag concert in Long Beach, California in 1986, singer Scott Weiland and bassist Robert DeLeo set about piecing together what would become one of the most successful hard rock acts of the 1990s. Moving into an ex's apartment, the pair formed a band originally known as Mighty Joe Young, building a steady fanbase around the San Diego area in an attempt to steer clear of a Los Angeles music scene that was widely perceived as being fake. Following several years of cutting their teeth on the local club circuit, the band signed to Atlantic at the turn of 1992 – the year that drummer Eric Kretz and Robert's guitarist brother Dean joined – but were soon forced to change their name due to a blues musician already laying claim to the moniker, settling on Stone Temple Pilots after pressure from the label to shun their preferred choice of Shirley Temple's Pussy. Months later the group released their debut album *Core* – which has shifted nearly 10million copies to date and establishing the quartet as a genuine mainstream force. 1994's *Purple* would see the band top the charts as their meteoric rise showed no signs of slowing, but by the time third effort *Tiny Music... Songs From The Vatican Gift Shop* arrived in 1996, STP would see their very existence hanging by a thread. News soon broke that Scott had a drug habit that would see him serve a brief stint behind bars, causing the cancellation of much of the album's touring cycle. The band briefly went on hiatus in 1997, though two years later they reformed to record the aptly titled *No. 4*, followed by *Shangri-la Dee Da* in 2001; the only Stone Temple Pilots album not to achieve platinum status. It wasn't long before STP's future again took a downward turn, and following an altercation between Dean and Scott on the last night of a North American tour in 2002 they officially announced their split. Scott Weiland would go on to front supergroup Velvet Revolver – also featuring GN'R guitarist Slash, bassist Duff McKagan and drummer Matt Sorum – for five years, before Scott was unceremoniously ousted and STP reformed for a US tour in April 2008. Their self-titled sixth album is set to be released on May 24.

FANBOY!

JOE PERRY
AEROSMITH

"STP are definitely at the top of my list when it comes to great bands. I know they're influenced by a lot of jazz and, as heavy as they are, their approach to rock'n'roll is different and refreshing. We even wrote a bunch of songs with Robert (DeLeo, STP bassist) about 10 years ago. I don't think they've ever surfaced anywhere but there's a couple of them that are on the list and could appear at some point or another. I think that they're going to continue to have a long and fruitful career, as long as they keep it together."

MUST HAVE

CORE

ATLANTIC, 1992

People power personified

RELEASED at a time when Nirvana's second album had catapulted grunge into the mainstream and Pearl Jam were forging a reputation as the most exciting new band in the world, the stage should have been set for STP's debut to be welcomed with open arms. Although *Core* would indeed go on to become one of the biggest-selling albums of the 1990s, gaining them a huge following in a matter of months, the band's arrival into the public eye was met with frosty resistance from much of the music press. With Alice In Chains' seminal *Dirt* album hitting shelves on the exact same day, critics were quick to label the band as rip-offs and bandwagon-jumpers of the overwhelmingly popular grunge scene, pouring scorn upon their very existence from the get-go. *Rolling Stone* magazine would even go as far as declaring the group Worst New Band in their 1993 end-of-year poll, but with the publication's readership voting them Best New Band in the same issue it was clear that STP's rise to the top was a forgone conclusion. Based around a theme that Scott Weiland would describe as "the confusion of humanity", *Core* stands not only as the quartet's finest hour but one of the most seminal hard rock records of the past 20 years. From the slow, downtuned grooves of *Dead And Bloated* to the electric stomp of *Crackerman*, *Core* possessed an arsenal of finely crafted songs that would continue to capture the imagination of music lovers for the better part of two decades. *Sex Type Thing* showed the group's ability to produce full-throttle rock'n'roll in a manner that rivalled almost any of their peers while the brooding *Creep* served as proof that ballads could boast genuine power after a sea of hair metal bands had done their best to ruin such a concept a decade earlier, but it was the ragtime sway of *Plush* that would drive the album forward more than any other. The song would go on to reach number 18 in the US singles chart and defeated AC/DC at the 1994 Grammys. *Core* has since gone on to sell almost 10million copies worldwide, providing a joyous slap in the face to those who so quickly wrote it off and proving that critical acclaim and commercial success don't always have to go hand in hand.

BEST TRACK: *Plush*

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While they would produce five studio albums within a nine-year period, STP's respective members dabbled in several projects of their own during both the 90s and 00s. During the band's brief hiatus towards the end of the 20th century, Scott Weiland dipped his toe into the world of solo albums with 1998's *12 Bar Blues* as well as momentary group The Magnificent Bastards, while Eric Kretz and the DeLeo brothers linked up with Ten Inch Men frontman Dave Coutts for the short-lived Talk Show, releasing their lone, self-titled effort in 1997. Scott's later exploits with Velvet Revolver with the ex-Gunners (2004's *Contraband* and 2007's *Libertad*) are well documented, though the DeLeos also tried their hand at the supergroup game with Army Of Anyone, to less acclaim. Featuring Filter vocalist Richard Patrick, the band released their eponymous

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RECOMMENDED

PURPLE

ATLANTIC, 1994

The surge continues

THE all-important second album is a hurdle that has tripped and in some cases caused many a band to fall flat on their collective faces, but in *Purple* STP produced something that would not only sustain the band's huge popularity, but also set new benchmarks in the process. While *Core* had sold in its millions, the album had failed to climb any higher than number three in the American album charts, but in *Purple* the quartet produced a bona fide chart-topper. Adding elements of psychedelic rock (*Lounge Fly, Silvergun Superman*) and country (*Interstate Love Song, Big Empty*) to their hard-rocking grunge sound, the result was an album virtually on a par with its predecessor, showcasing a willingness to branch out and try new things where others may have simply rested on their laurels. Bold and challenging in the extreme, *Purple* remains a breathtaking opus of enduring appeal to generations of rockers.

BEST TRACK: *Vasoline*

NO. 4

ATLANTIC, 1999

Their fourth album. Funny that...

THAT STP ever made it to album number four is something that will be regarded as a minor miracle in the eyes of many. With the album allegedly named after a particularly strong form of heroin, Scott Weiland would find himself jailed for substance abuse shortly after the end of the album's recording process, capping a turbulent five-year period that had seen the band go on hiatus previously. Heavier and understandably darker than much of their previous work, the likes of *Down* and *No Way Out* saw the group moving closer to *Core*'s downtrodden roots, but in the soaring *Atlanta* and radio hit *Sour Girl* they would also reveal a welcome dose of light to the moments of consuming shade. Despite the album receiving very little promotion due to Scott's ongoing problems, *No. 4* still achieved a Top 10 chart position, selling more than a million copies in the US alone within its first 10 months of release.

BEST TRACK: *Atlanta*

WILD CARD

SHANGRI-LA DEE DA

ATLANTIC, 2001

Five (and still) alive

FOLLOWING both the quality and success of *No. 4*, coupled with what appeared to be genuine progress in Scott Weiland's ongoing personal struggles, STP came into the writing process with a renewed sense of purpose and an abundance of ideas. Indeed, the band originally planned their fifth outing to be a double album, only relenting once Atlantic failed to show sufficient support for the project. With a number of songs driven by acoustic guitars (*Wonderful, Bi-Polar Bear*) and others featuring an almost retro pop tinge (*Too Cool Queenie*), *Shangri-la Dee Da* is without question the group's most varied and, at times, well-rounded affair. There were also moments of sublime pop-rock in the form of *Hollywood Bitch* and *Days Of The Week*, but tracks such as *Dumb Love* stayed close enough to their grunge beginnings to avoid accusations of turning their backs on their past.

BEST TRACK: *Coma*

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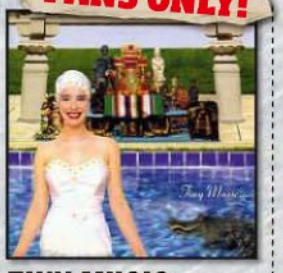


TINY MUSIC... SONGS FROM THE VATICAN GIFT SHOP

ATLANTIC, 1996

The sound of madness

WITH their offstage issues now at their most problematic, it should have come as little surprise when *Tiny Music...* reared its head to a mixed response from fans and critics alike. Although the album would land a Top Five chart position after the first week of release, many were quick to criticise what they saw to be a lack of distinct personality, while others declared it a bold and fearless attempt to establish themselves in a league of their own. It's easy to be confused by *Tiny Music...* such is the sheer variation of the songs. *Lady Picture Show* could easily have been on a late Beatles albums, next to the abrasive garage rock stylings of *Art School Girl*. There are undeniably moments to treasure, but for anything less than a seasoned veteran this may prove a bridge too far.

BEST TRACK: *Big Bang Baby*

AVOID!

THANK YOU

ATLANTIC, 2003

The standard Greatest Hits collection

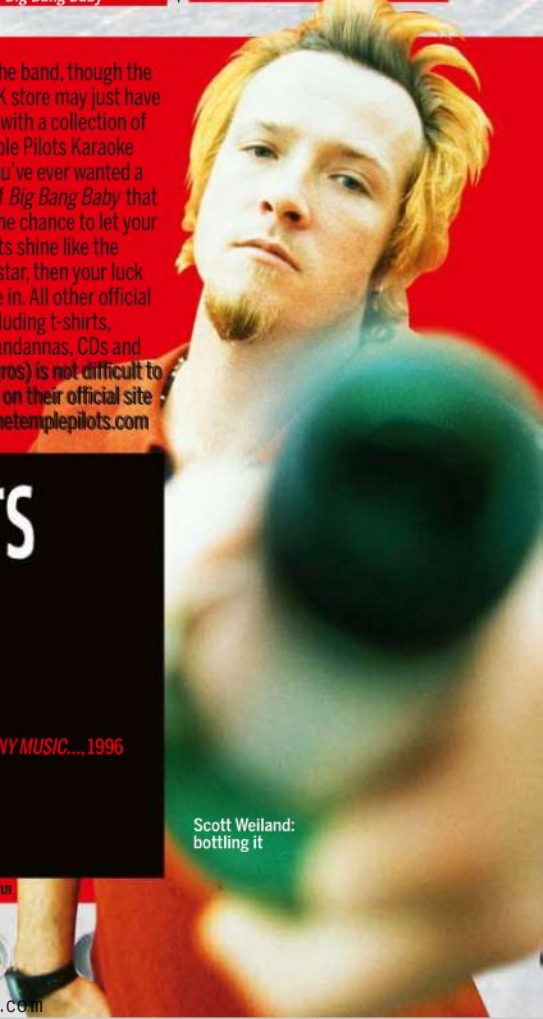
IT may seem strange that a greatest hits album (i.e. an album supposedly solely comprised of the biggest and best songs of a band's career) finds itself in this spot, but in truth *Thank You* is a compilation that holds little more than the ability to detract from the flow, and in turn the sense of belonging to the songs that it contains. Hearing the likes of *Wicked Garden*, *Big Empty* and *Interstate Love Song* can never a bad thing be, but without the immediate company of *No Memory, Still Remains* and *Unglued* the poignancy and effect of the songs is somewhat lacking compared to their original forms. One unique feature found on *Thank You* is the exclusive inclusion of *All In The Suit That You Wear*, a previously unreleased track recorded not long before the group's split which, while decent, remains no more essential than the rest of it.

BEST TRACK: *All In The Suit That You Wear*

debut in late 2006. On a more internal level, there are also rarities and little-knowns to be found, perhaps most notably the quartet's live performance on *MTV Unplugged*. You'll be lucky to find this unique and powerful performance outside of the torrent world, but with no CD/DVD option readily available for purchase it's an experience well

worth a Google search and a click of the mouse. For those who pride themselves on keeping their

exhaustive fanboy collections complete, you can also pick up the limited and largely pointless *Buy This* compilation, while for the more visually stimulated there's also the recently released *Live At The House Of Blues* DVD, consisting of approximately one hour of live footage from last year's North American tour. Perhaps best of all, a quick search on iTunes' American server will reveal a charming and somewhat bizarre-looking orchestral tribute to the band, though the good old UK store may just have trumped it with a collection of Stone Temple Pilots Karaoke songs. If you've ever wanted a rendition of *Big Bang Baby* that gives you the chance to let your vocal talents shine like the proverbial star, then your luck may just be in. All other official merch (including t-shirts, hoodies, bandannas, CDs and even babygros) is not difficult to track down on their official site – www.stonetemplepilots.com



Scott Weiland: bottling it

DISCOGRAPHY

1992 *Core* [Atlantic]
1994 *Purple* [Atlantic]
1996 *Tiny Music... Songs From The Vatican Gift Shop* [Atlantic]
1999 *No. 4* [Atlantic]
2001 *Shangri-la Dee Da* [Atlantic]
2001 *Revolution SINGLE* [Atlantic]
2003 *Thank You* [Atlantic]
2008 *Buy This* [Rhino]
2010 *Stone Temple Pilots* [Atlantic]

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ESSENTIAL STONE TEMPLE PILOTS

1. *Sex Type Thing* CORE, 1992
2. *Wicked Garden* CORE, 1992
3. *Creep* CORE, 1992
4. *Plush* CORE, 1992
5. *Vasoline* PURPLE, 1994
6. *Interstate Love Song* PURPLE, 1994
7. *Big Bang Baby* TINY MUSIC..., 1996
8. *Trippin' On A Hole In A Paper Heart* TINY MUSIC..., 1996
9. *Down* NO. 4, 1999
10. *Sour Girl* NO. 4, 1999
11. *Atlanta* NO. 4,, 1999
12. *Coma* SHANGRI-LA DEE DA, 2001

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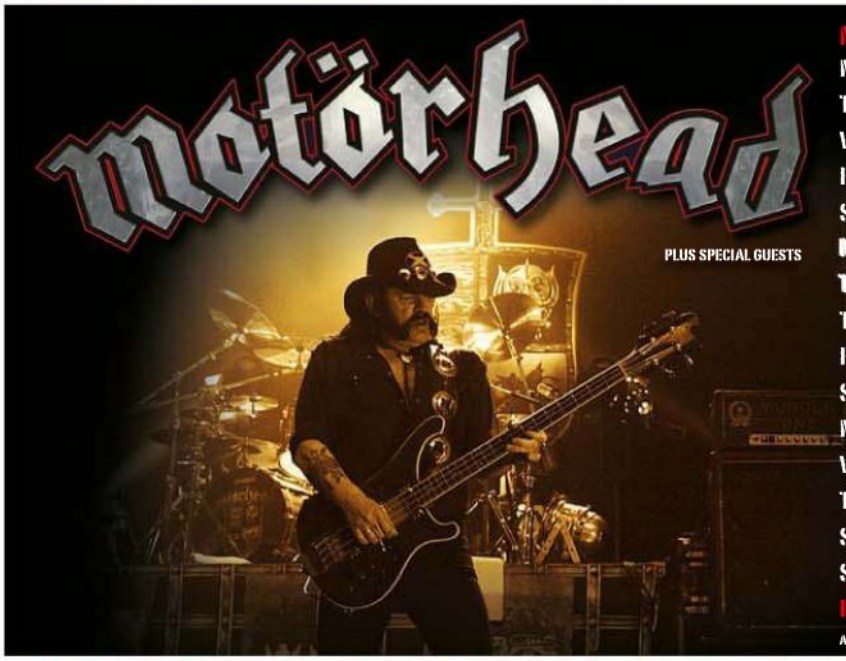

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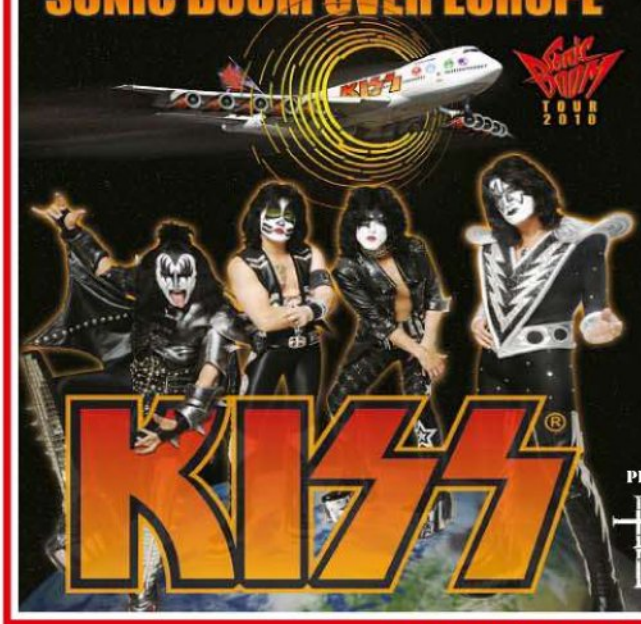

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Airbourne's Joel O'Keeffe: born to kill

Airbourne

Black Spiders/Taking Dawn

HAMMERSMITH APOLLO

FEW bands in our world can boast a career acceleration that puts them in front of an Apollo audience of 5,000 people within a mere two years after hitting our radar, but Airbourne have done it. With two of the most energetic rock albums of the last decade and ecstatic live reviews, it seems pointless to ask whether they can deliver the goods...

Openers **TAKING DAWN [7]** may have had their debut album for Roadrunner over-produced, but tonight's raw, 80s-inspired heavy metal is a great starting point for an evening of celebratory sounds. The young Las Vegas crew take their *Slave To The Grind*-era Skid Row sound and deliver it with youthful exuberance that – while verging on the contrived – shows more than a little promise.

Second on are the fast-rising three-guitar monster called **BLACK SPIDERS [8]**. The Northern quintet bang out their no-nonsense Britrock with wit and charisma and refreshing cool. A real rock'n'roll band for people who want riffs not gimmicks.

AIRBOURNE's **[10]** entrance sends tremors through W6: the lights go up, four bogan blokes strut onto the stage and a soundwave goes out like an H bomb. Set opener *Raise The Flag* and the following *Hellfire* make Motörhead sound like a skiffle band. Each short, sharp shock of Aus'n'roll is delivered at full volume and with the conviction of religious zealots as *Diamond In The Rough* proves an early set highlight. With only two albums to their name and two hours to fill, the band almost exhaust their catalogue: *Girls In Black, What's Eatin' You, Born To Kill, Cheap Wine & Cheaper Women* and more all filling the first half.

As if to punctuate the set, frontman Joel O'Keeffe – stripped to the waist – goes walkabout. With his wireless guitar he stomps off stage and into the crowd, soloing as he goes. Everyone peers round to see where he is, a spotlight following as he roams. He's at the back, then he's upstairs high-fiving grinning fans and finally heading diagonally back through the crowd to the stage – again, never missing a note. Up on stage the band go for the Quo as 'Roadsy' and 'Streetsy' headbang in unison awaiting the arrival of Joel. As the set draws to a close, the band plough through *No Way But The Hard Way* and *Too Much, Too Young, Too Fast* before entering the first of two encores featuring *Runnin' Wild* and *Stand Up For Rock'N'Roll*, with *Blackjack* finally closing the show.

You can denigrate Airbourne for being derivative and sounding like AC/DC, but guess what, they couldn't give a fuck less because they sound like their favourite band and travel across the world to play to thousands of rock fans who value a great show above shit excuses to dislike bands. And the joke's on the naysayers because here are 5,000 rather ecstatic campers. Airbourne are an utter triumph and, tonight, go beyond compare.

GILL

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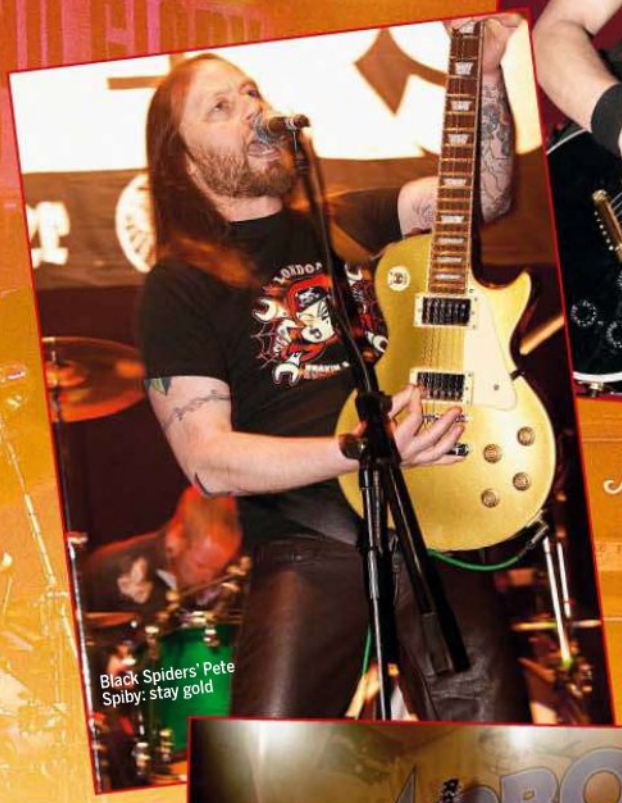
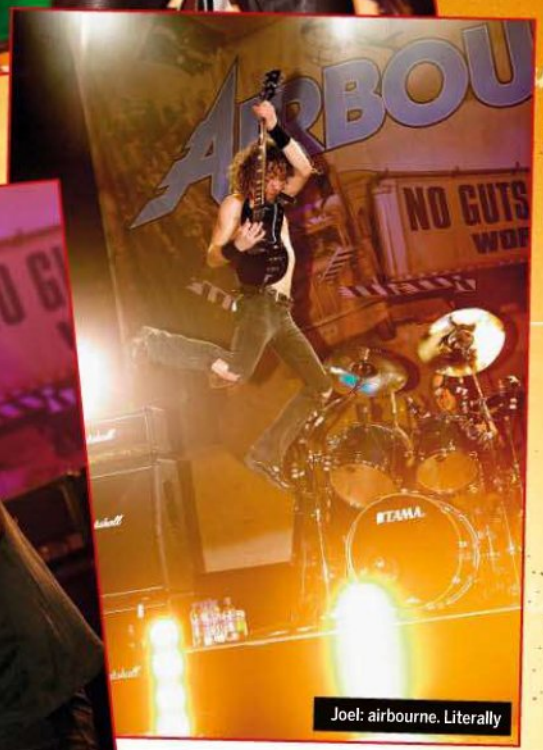
Taking Dawn's Chris Babbitt: Zakk Wylde meets Matt Heafy



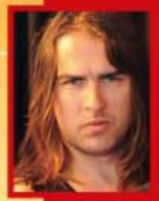
Black Spiders' Pete Spiby: stay gold



Joel: airbourne. Literally

David Roads: a diamond geezer in the rough

How was it for you?



Ryan O'Keeffe
Airbourne

"The show was fantastic, a memorable moment. We'll remember it for a long time – we'll be taking something special away from that show, for sure. We try to play what everyone wants to hear, but people have so many different favourites. We spent as much as we could on production as well. For the first time we had a truck to carry all the stuff in so we had banners and lights and so on. And of course we had 24 Marshall cabinets! When Joel goes on his little wander through the crowd I have to keep my eye on him. He raises his arm when there's a change and he's ready to play the next bit, so I have to keep my eye on him. He sometimes gets lost but he's usually OK. We have high expectations of ourselves but when we played the Borderline show the other year, we never thought we'd be playing in front of 5,000 people at the Apollo."

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Opeth's Mikael Åkerfeldt: a wolf in Lee Dorrian's clothing

Opeth

LONDON ROYAL ALBERT HALL

CELEBRATING their 20th anniversary in style, Opeth are arguably the only band of their generation or (supposed) genre that could take to the stage at the Royal Albert Hall without looking as if they'd walked in through the wrong door and swapped places with the squinting mumbler Michael Bublé. Despite origins in the Stockholm DM scene, Mikael Åkerfeldt and his comrades have become synonymous with progressive rock in recent years, securing a diverse and increasingly huge fanbase along the way, and as much as he may joke about bringing "death metal into the halls of fine culture", Mikael has earned this moment by steering his ship with dignity, intelligence and ferocious individualism. Put simply, it doesn't feel remotely weird to be here, witnessing Opeth perform *Blackwater Park* – including a subtly reworked *Harvest* – in its majestic entirety. It just feels *right*.

What really hits home is that the Royal Albert Hall has the acoustics to ensure that Opeth sound incredible tonight, with the band's thunderous core rendered with stark potency and every last subtle nuance and shade fizzing and gleaming in the half-light. The whole evening takes on an air of slickly executed enchantment, as the cameras roll to capture it all for a forthcoming DVD and an ecstatic audience wills the Swedes on to greater heights. When they return after a brief mid-show interval, they launch into a joyous trek through their back catalogue, serving up one song from each of their other studio albums, including such rarely played gems as *Advent, April Ethereal, The Moor* and *Wreath*, before closing with a sublime rendition of *The Lotus Eater* that very nearly goes tits-up when a cameraman dislodges guitarist Fredrik Åkesson's guitar lead, but which is deftly steered to its rightful conclusion. When the rock'n'roll wind is blowing your way, everything falls into place. A triumphant, well-earned and unforgettable occasion. **[10]**

DOM LAWSON

Opeth: in a league of one

DELAIN: ESTER SEGARRA DOMINIK JAMES SHARROCK OPETH: VEGAR ARELSHUS

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Delain's Charlotte Wessels: nuclear wessels

Delain

GARAGE, LONDON

ALTHOUGH considered a Euro symphonic metal band, Delain have a lot more in common with Boston and Bon Jovi. They also know how to make an entrance, as each member comes on separately to growing applause, with the biggest ovation being reserved for vocalist Charlotte Wessels. She has that rock star confidence that tells of a misspent youth watching David Lee Roth. While she has a coquettish lack of self-awareness, Charlotte struts, and demands the audience sing and clap along. It's her stage, and she aims to make sure we all know it. Give credit to Delain for also putting on a show, During *The Gathering*, a confetti cannon goes off, albeit one barely able to cover the first two rows. And there are podiums for guitarist Ewout Pieters and bassist Otto Schimmelpenninck van der Oije. The latter is playing his first ever show with the band, but he seems totally at home in a set that's split evenly between the band's two albums to date. And it's a rollercoaster of sumptuous melodies and towering harmonies, even if there's a judicious use of electronic backup. The band even do the rarely performed *Lost*, although Charlotte's claims that it was almost a last-minute decision is more about showmanship than confession. Delain already have a fanatically devoted following over here – and deservedly so. They are a breath of fresh European air, who will doubtless become much bigger. **[9]**

MALCOLM DOME

Edguy

White Wizzard

RIO'S, LEEDS

CLOSE your eyes and at times you could be listening to Pegazus, the Australian crew who almost triumphed during the late 90s trad-metal revival. Why the likes of Hammerfall and tonight's venerable headliners have lasted since those far-off days and Pegazus have not is open to debate, but it throws up a couple of salient facts. First, trad-metal revivals are regular occurrences and second, in any cull of the current crop of all-new old-schoolers, **WHITE WIZZARD [8]** *will* survive. Despite complaining of throat problems, frontman Wyatt leads his merry men through a set of thoroughly authentic NWOBHM homage in exuberant style. These guys are the real deal. The likeable and extremely un-German Tobias Sammet is also a frontman at the top of his game. Since shifting away from pure power metal towards more melodic hard rock à la Tinnitus Sanctus and Rocket Ride, **EDGUY [8]** have transformed themselves from slightly sincere to seriously entertaining. In a set which barely deviates from last year's *Fucking With Fire* live album, *Vain Glory Opera*, the infinitely catchy *Superheroes* and the daft *Lavatory Love Machine* stand out. Edguy deliver a rollicking good time with plenty of sauce and nothing to worry about.

GREG MOFFITT

Dommin

When Gravity Fails

BORDERLINE, LONDON

JUST over a month ago, Dommin were opening for Lacuna Coil but now they're back with their first ever UK headline show at one of London's more intimate venues. Opening for them are **WHEN GRAVITY FAILS [6]**, who not only sound like a slowed-down *Alive*-era Pearl Jam but also look like they've walked into the wrong gig. Their grungy, progressive sound might have worked well in different circumstances but tonight it leaves things a little flat. **DOMMIN'S [7]** thundering intro does its best to blow away the cobwebs; the moody opening bars of *Tonight* flood the stage and as Dommin step out in their black uniforms it's instantly noticeable that they seem much more comfortable performing in a smaller venue. But there's something holding them back. Kristofer's vocals are barely audible as he struggles with a sore throat, while, as a band, they lack the energy of their European rockabilly counterparts. Even the Danny Elfman-esque *Dark Holiday* fails to make an impact and after a lacklustre rendition of Depeche Mode's *People Are People* it seems all is lost. But then the heart-wrenching acoustic ballad *Making The Most* kicks in and something happens – it's like a sudden adrenaline rush of emotion and it stays with them into the encore. With *Closure* as their swansong, the four-piece end on a high, their earlier hurdles successfully leapt over.

NATASHA SCHARF

Kristofer Dommin: rock-a-by-billy

Warrior Soul

O2 ACADEMY ISLINGTON, LONDON

THAT Warrior Soul singer – and remaining original member – Kory Clarke is still angry and ready to rail against the world is a given; that he still looks like the young singer who came raging into existence in 1990 takes some getting used to. All hair and attitude, Kory may finally have the Democrats in the White House, but his terse, rapid-fire delivery remains intact. Succinctly mixing the set with the highlights of their latest *Destroy The War Machine* album – *The Fourth Reich*, the arch *Bad News Rock N' Roll Boyfriend* – with songs that snared them their original Geffen deal and made fans out of people like Lars Ulrich: *Superpower Dreamland, Charlie's Out Of Prison*, the furious-sounding *Punk And Belligerent*, Warrior Soul still sound steely and resilient. Band lineups might come and go, much to some fans' chagrin, but in guitarist Rille Lundell, Kory appears to have stumbled upon a latter-day star. He might spit more than your average cobra, but his effortlessly fluid playing (and some remarkable showing off) means that the band have finally filled the generous space left all those years ago by the flamboyant Johnny Rico. Kory's still keeping himself busy as Trouble's singer, but some real time and attention to one of New York's most original bands could mean that Warrior Soul's renaissance could soon be complete. **[7]**

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Gigs

Making Pink Floyd's laser show look like four Maglites...

...and making Rammstein's pyro look like two people lighting fags

Brian Hicks: master of... ceremonies

Trans-Siberian Orchestra

RADIO CITY MUSIC HALL, NEW YORK

It's often been said that the UK and the US are two countries separated by a common language. Sometimes we're also separated by what counts for entertainment. In the UK, we have Christmas pantos – low-rent soap stars treading the boards in age-old fairytales in crumbling theatres the country over. In New York City, however, they have the Radio City Music Hall Christmas Spectacular – a big, brash, OTT singing and dancing celebration of the Christmas season in a most stunning Art Deco venue.

Fitting then, that the Trans-Siberian Orchestra (the theatrical power metallists known for their humungous Christmas music shows) are staging their latest 'rock theatre' extravaganza at Radio City. Lights? Oh yes, they've got lights – impressive, retina-worringly big ones. Lasers? Yup, by the dozen, and often at an intensity to rival a Pink Floyd light show. A cast of thousands? Absolutely. On stage you'll find a full rock band, a string section, a narrator and no fewer than 10 guest singers.

Clocking in at a bum-numbing three hours, the ensemble wend their way through a semi-staged version of TSO's 2000 concept album, *Beethoven's Last Night*. And here's where the problem lies. The original faux theatrical material just isn't that strong, and no amount of laser-trickery, giant video screens, jarring interjection of an over-enunciating narrator or choreography that seems to consist entirely of a lot of hair flicking, is sufficient to sustain a show of this length.

The musicianship can't be faulted, though – Al Pitrelli and fellow axeman Chris Caffery tear out ferocious riffs and assault the back catalogues of Beethoven and Mozart like never before. Their renditions of the latter's *Marriage Of Figaro Overture* – complete with duelling guitarists vying with a hyperactive electric violinist – and their bruising take on Beethoven's *Fifth* are rendered in such a bombastic, metallic fashion, that it hints at what a high-voltage metal extravaganza this *could* have been.

TSO are aiming for the spectacular, and musically on a couple of fleeting occasions, almost manage it. Sadly though, with the reliance on over-emotive, pseudo-theatricality and bad rhymes, it more often reeks of trying-too-hard pantomime. **[5]**

SIÂN LLEWELLYN

Al Pitrelli: 'scuse me while I kiss the sky

Chris Caff: rip'n'wail

Valentina: oh, to be that microphone

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The 69 Eyes

ISLINGTON ACADEMY, LONDON

THE next time someone tells you there are no more rock stars, point them in the direction of Jyrki 69. Tonight, he possesses an edgy charisma, knows this and flaunts it with an arrogant insouciance – here is a rock star. He is the fulcrum, the heart of the band, the anti-hero who is not suffering angst and pain due to his curse of dark depravity – hell no, Jykri is revelling in it! The voice has a caustic velvet touch, leading this impressive band through a set that starts on a high with *Back In Blood* and climaxes with a crescendo through *Lost Boys*. Not that the rest of the Eyes are passengers. They are a powerfully evocative musical foursome, with the lightness of touch to allow melodies to breathe, but with some heavy firepower at their fingertips. The packed crowd of goths, punks, emos and black metalheads lap up every song, most of them instantly recognisable. The swoop of *Never Say Die* and *Lips Of Blood*, the lustful threat of *Kiss Me Undead* and *Dead Girls Are Easy*, the erotic ripple of *Perfect Skin* and *The Good, The Bad & The Undead*... everything's delivered with style, class yet also a really sleazy sniff. This is a potent quintet who can hold a crowd spellbound. Trash rock for vampires: now, that's entertainment. **[8]**

MALCOLM DOME

The 69 Eyes: the devil in leather

Steel Panther

BRIXTON ACADEMY, LONDON

IT shouldn't be possible – Steel Panther, less than a year since the release of their rapturously received *Feel The Steel* record and their riotous first-ever UK appearance at Download and – it should be said – the *Metal Hammer* Golden Gods the next day, are just moments away from playing a rammed Brixton Academy. You can tell by the hordes of wig-wearing, Spandex-clad devotees in the crowd that they've gained a legion of fans and – if the camera cranes spiralling over the crowd for an upcoming DVD are anything to go by – it's clear the Panther have grown to monstrous, even scary proportions. And it's easy to tell why – Satchel's trademark blowjob re-enactment, the venue-wide singalong to the uproarious *Community Property*, the appearance of foam shocker hands during the song that so deftly summarises the delights of that pokey activity – it all points to a big, glowing imaginary sign above the stage that states, simply: 'Steel Panther Fucking Rule'. If there's any downside to tonight, it's that Michael Starr and company have yet to play the setlist that made them LA fixtures: the impeccably rendered love-fest for 80s metal – from Crüe to Van Halen that, combined with a beer in hand and a light spirit, has made these pirates gods of the live stage. Roll on this year's appearances at Download and the Golden Gods – it's gonna get messy. **[7]**

ALEXANDER MILAS

Steel Panther: Lexxi gives Michael a tip-off

(hed)P.E.

CAMDEN UNDERWORLD, LONDON

CALIFORNIA'S 'G-Punk' rockers (hed) p.e. haven't got the best reputation in the heavy music community. They've been going for over a decade but their comedy facepaint, conspiracy theories, rap-rock influence, controversial attitude and recent lack of dancefloor hits are dismissed with withering sighs and laughter by the cynical among us. Still, however uncool they are on paper, they're stupidly enjoyable live. The bandanas and sinister clown make-up are accompanied by manic grins and frontman Jared's rude boy cap (tilted at every opportunity), and the music's hyper-upbeat. Political and anti-religious rants are saved 'til the end, *Sophia* proves brilliantly funky, and the reggae influence is strong tonight as they pull off genuinely cool Sublime and Bob Marley covers. Their fanbase is obviously loyal as the gig's rammed, but the huge reaction to *Killing Time*, *Crazylegs* and *Bartender* prove that their older tracks are still the best, and, in keeping with their raw, explosive show style, the equipment isn't always in tune and the DJ barely features apart from throwing the occasional rap hands. They're a muddle of influences, rage and ridiculousness, but also mischief, irony and groove. The fun's in just going with the flow. **[7]**

NIK YOUNG

Russian Circles

Earthless

CAMDEN UNDERWORLD, LONDON

TAKE a random Tony Iommi solo (preferably something from *Master Of Reality*), stretch it out for a 50 minutes and pass it through an Echoplex. Underpin this with a steady, walking bassline whilst Animal from the Muppets drums manically over the top and you're probably getting close to an approximation of **EARTHLESS** [8]. OK, so Mario Rubalcaba is a considerably better drummer than Animal, but in a 50-minute set that appears to consist of one long, improvised piece, he and guitarist Isaiah Mitchell constantly and incessantly wring every acid-drenched note out of their instruments in a gloriously self-indulgent performance. The looks of the crowd grow even bigger when **RUSSIAN CIRCLES** [9] appear onstage. Having released the album of their careers with *Geneva*, the sense of anticipation coursing through the expectant masses is palpable, and upon entering a nearly pitch-black stage, backlit only by a few ground-level spotlights, they do not disappoint. Early on *Harper Lewis* and *Malko* are belted out with a level of focus and skull-crushing intensity far above what appears on record before *Geneva* and an encore of their chef d'oeuvre, *Station*, ensures that all leave the building in a bewildered haze.

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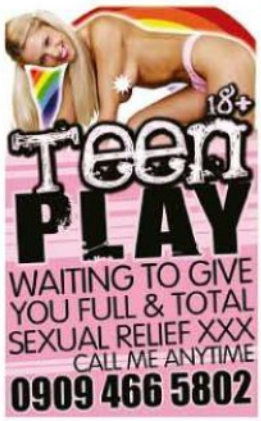

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THE LOST, THE REDISCOVERED, THE PANT-WETTINGLY BIZARRE

SIDE SHOW

CHRIS WALTER/GETTY

Armored Saint (left to right): John Bush. Joey Vera, Phil Sandoval, Dave Pritchard, Gonzo

ARMORED SAINT

ARMORED SAINT were bigger than Metallica in the early 80s; Lars and co once even tried to poach vocalist John Bush. But they opted to lay out a legacy they'd later reclaim.

Words: Malcolm Dome.

It's strange how fate has twinned Metallica and Armored Saint. Not only did the pair share the same management (Q. Prime, Inc.) in the mid-80s (when the Saint were actually the bigger band), but both vocalist John Bush and bassist Joey Vera were offered the chance of joining Metallica.

"Just before Metallica recorded *Kill 'Em All*, they called several times, but I was happy being in Armored Saint," says John.

When Cliff Burton died in 1986, it was Joey who was the first choice to replace him. But again, a commitment to the Los Angeles-based Saint led to rejection of these overtures.

However, while Metallica's star continued to rise inexorably, Armored Saint's stuttered and spluttered. And it's a situation that still frustrates the singer.

"There were a lot of mistakes made, some of which we have to take responsibility for. I feel that the production on our first album (1984's *March Of The Saint*) should have been a lot better, and we also suffered from not going to Europe early on in our career. But we listened to our management when they said, 'Don't go over there, you'll just lose money.' Remember, these were the same managers who sent Metallica to Europe early on! We didn't get to tour there until 1991 – long after everyone else.

"The irritating thing was that all our roots came from British metal. More so than any other band in LA. And I still believe that the band's career would have been so much bigger had we gone sooner."

As it was, Armored Saint – who started in 1982 – never quite achieved the profile and success many predicted would happen. After four studio albums, the band threw in the towel when John joined Anthrax in 1992; the previous year they'd suffered the grievous blow of guitarist Dave Pritchard dying from leukemia.

The Saint tentatively returned with 2000's *Revelation* album, seeing the reuniting of John, Joey, guitarists Jeff Duncan and Phil Sandoval and drummer Gonzo. But it's new album *La Raza* that has finally accentuated the realisation of all that pent-up potential. Simply put, it's the finest record of their career and almost a reaffirmation of the reasons why John and Joey turned down Metallica all those years ago.

"There's no pressure on us any more," says the singer. "Joey and I just set out to write songs and see where they led us. We had no agenda, no plan, except to come up with the best music we could. We've nobody to please but ourselves. However, we seem to have hit the bullseye."

But exactly where Armored Saint go from here remains open to question, with John reluctant to commit to touring for the sake of going on the road.

"I don't need to see the inside of any more hotel rooms. I'm happy to be at home. If we get the right offers, then we will play live. But I'm not prepared to play in front of 40 fans, the bar staff and a few waitresses. Not any more."

Yet, there is that deep, abiding passion for this band that still drives the vocalist. "Life is good. I'm happy that we've made a record people seem to like. Is this the best album we've ever done? It's the best album that we could have done."

FIND OUT MORE

If you want to find out more about Armored Saint's plans for the future, then point your cursor at www.armoredsaint.com. There's also more going on in John Bush's life right now, as he's planning to spend the summer touring back in Anthrax. Bassist Joey Vera, in the meantime, continues to work occasionally with prog metal heroes Fates Warning.

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PRESENTS...
Subterranea
Going Underground
1349
Norway's black metal champions come back from the beyond
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The Art of Darkness

1349 tore up their true black metal template with last year's bleak, avant-garde oddity, *Revelations Of The Black Flame*. Now they're heading back to more familiar territory, can they become standard bearers once more?

Words: Dom Lawson. Pictures: Ester Segarra.

No one ever said that black metal was supposed to be easy. After three widely praised albums that had thrust them firmly into the black metal spotlight, delighting those who had been craving something from the genre that genuinely tapped into the eerie essence that first made it such a compelling alternative to everything else, Oslo's 1349 seemed well-poised to achieve a higher level of fame and acclaim. But then, in a move that seemed deliberately designed to uphold black metal's ability to leave its adherents aghast, the band let rip with *Revelations Of The Black Flame*, an outright curveball and a radical departure that polarised opinion wildly. Co-mixed by Celtic Frost/Triptykon legend Tom G Warrior, it was an album that abandoned much of the band's trademark sound in favour of a muddy and wilfully awkward wall of snail's pace sludge – purposefully left of centre, laden with artful overtones and, most bizarrely, featuring a cover version of Pink Floyd's *Set Controls For The Heart Of The Sun*. The response received was as unpredictable and extreme as the album itself. Some suggested that 1349 were executing a malevolent prank designed to bring the band's four-album deal with Candlelight Records to a defiant and chaotic close, while others hailed the record as a stroke of genius and a work of art. Or maybe it was just a bit of both...

"It's not like we didn't foresee that reaction," says guitarist Archaon. "We needed to go somewhere and find an interesting angle. At the time, Frost was busy and we had some rehearsals with just me, Ravn [1349 vocalist] and Seidemann [bassist], and Ravn would be behind the drumkit and obviously that was not the same! It was a new approach and that was healthy for us. It was a new way to make music. Black metal needs a renaissance. It's rare to find a black metal album that has more than just the standard things that everyone delivers. We always want to be on the borderline, doing something extravagant and new. We are an art band. I like that definition more and more."

"People have to remember that this is not another ordinary kind of music," adds Ravn. "Everyone is forgetting that black metal is supposed to be radical and be provocative, and that has been lost in recent years. So to do an album like *Revelations*... was liberating in many ways. First of all, the musical challenge was to make something that was so different from what we'd done before, so that we didn't get caught in one lane. That's not how we regard the art of black metal in general. What we like most about the art of black metal is there are no limitations. It doesn't have to be fast. It's all about the mood and the atmosphere of the music. We have a different agenda from other musicians. We do this first and foremost for ourselves. It has no commercial value. This is our legacy and it's something that we want to do because we feel a need to do it. We don't do this because we have to make a living."

Willingly or not, 1349 threw a spanner into the works of their own career with *Revelations...*, but there will be no such chaos ensuing when the band's considerable fanbase get their hands on *Demonoir*, its swift follow-up. A massive and undeniable return to form, it combines the blistering tempos and ferocious intensity of 2006's *Hellfire* with the macabre atmospheres and spectral sludge of *Revelations...*, linking the resultant eruptions of arcane belligerence together with a series of sinister and disorientating ambient interludes, known as the *Tunnels Of Set XI-XVII*. Songs like *Atomic Chapel* exhibit all the furious disgust and percussive violence that typified 1349's earlier material, but overall this is yet another crafty and compelling sidestep for a band who are increasingly disinclined to rest on their laurels.

"We'd rather lead than follow," states Ravn. "We just want to pursue and develop the ideas and the thoughts that we have regarding the artform of black metal and maintain this legacy that has been created. I think we have succeeded really well with that. We're not making the same album over and over again. We're expanding. We want to be able to look back at the experiences we had on previous albums and make something new out of that. *Demonoir* is the best example of this. You can get the feeling of all our previous albums on this album, but it's still something new, I think. We're taking it all further. We're looking back and moving forward at the same time."

"We're very passionate about what we're doing and we want to stand out in the sea of bands," says Archaon. "We have faced a lot of challenges but we've always gone forward, and now more than ever. Hopefully we are creating friction with our catalogue, making people curious about what we are doing. Black metal needs new blood and new spunk!"

Adorned with stark and striking red and black artwork, *Demonoir* is an album that grabs the attention even before you've heard a single note. But it's the atmosphere of this powerfully idiosyncratic record that really sets it apart from 99 per cent of everything else that is produced under the black metal banner these days. Even the title throws a whole mess of unnerving mental images into the mix, and with surreal but plainly macabre lyrics, primarily penned by SA Destroyer from Oslo thrash metallers Nocturnal Breed, the songs on *Demonoir* give off a potent aura of behind-the-curtain menace that should pin you to your seat throughout the album's warped, winding journey.

"It's *almost* a concept album about darkness, a description of an internal melancholic atmosphere," says Archaon. "We all have different arenas where we can express this, and art is one of them for us."

"There isn't really a concept behind the lyrics, but there is a concept regarding the music," reveals Ravn. "The music takes you on a special journey, but we have always used the lyrics as a means to bring you into the mood. Reading the lyrics together with

“You have to know and face your darkest emotions in order to control them and grow as a human being”

RAVN

1349 (left to right): Seidemann, Ravn, Frost, Archaon

1349 cast a spell of projection

The Devil's Detours

FOUR MORE SONIC DIVERSIONS FROM THE DARK SIDE

Mayhem
ORDO AD CHAO
SEASON OF MIST, 2007

Black metal's seminal pioneers have never shied away from a challenge, but their fourth full-length smashed all expectations. Harrowing, bleak and doggedly obtuse, this re-imagined black metal as a primal, hallucinatory ritual, hewn from the anti-social dreams of a band gone well and truly mad.

Entombed
SAME DIFFERENCE
MFN/THREEMAN, 1999

Already charged with polluting death metal with rock'n'roll influences – albeit with considerable success – Stockholm's finest pushed things too far for many on their fifth album, assimilating the noise rock rumble of Unsane and Cows. And putting a dog on the cover.

Yattering
III
YG, 2005

Previously known for genre-bending, technical death that marked them out as one of Poland's finest bands, Yattering went righteously crackers here, embracing drum'n'bass, trip hop, industrial and the avant-garde and turning themselves into the death metal equivalent of Dødheimsgard. Only twice as mental.

Meshuggah
CATCH THIRTY THREE
NUCLEAR BLAST, 2005

Renowned for their sanity-threatening polyrhythms, Sweden's chief metallic scientists finally went into orbit on this epic conceptual piece that was so intensely *out there* that time itself seemed to stretch as each fresh layer of lurching, disorientating riffs whooshed subversively by. The sound of metal cubed, perhaps.

"There are no limits to the amount of listeners we can attract"

ARCHAON

listening to the music, you will hopefully achieve and visualise the same things as we do. Our lyrics combine with the music and those two things will take you to the third, the visual. This is also the case with this album. On the title track, the lyrics are describing the visuals and detail of this room, this place that is *Demonoir*."

For all their artistic endeavours, 1349 have defied the odds over the years and steadily become one of the few black metal bands that seem able to make serious headway overseas, not least in the US where the Norwegians will shortly be embarking on a major tour as chief support to Cannibal Corpse, the biggest death metal band on the planet. As pairings go, it's a fairly strange and incongruous one, but with plenty of touring experience under their belts, Ravn and Archaon are sanguine about their impending commitments...

"I don't think too much about these things, really," drawls Ravn. "We pretty much go onstage and we go there to kill! What the audience thinks or what the response will be is secondary. It's more a matter of performing and doing our best as artists, rather than trying to win people over."

"There are always new roads to tread," says Archaon. "There are no limits to the amount of listeners we can attract. Nothing is cooler than other people liking what we do. Cannibal Corpse are not everyone's favourite band in 1349, but I like them. We have oblique tastes. We toured with Celtic Frost, we toured with Carcass, and those tours weren't exactly small. This time it's another good bill and it's good to be part of something extravagant."

That said, it's still hard to suppress a smirk at the notion of 1349 unleashing their hellish, otherworldly din on a room full of trendily attired deathcore scene kids. Who knows how traumatised some of these punters will be after enduring the 1349 experience for the first time?

"As you may have noticed, there isn't much in the way of interaction at 1349 concerts," deadpans Ravn. "There's no talking between the songs or dividing the audience into two halves and making them cheer. I don't think it fits the mood. A black metal concert should have an aura. I don't pay too much attention to people's reactions. I pay more attention to the feeling and the atmosphere in the room. People don't have to cheer and shout, I can sense if they are into the music, if they like it or not, regardless of how much applause we get. People don't quite know how to behave because it is irregular. There is no talking from the stage and there is a different atmosphere. It's not something stereotypical. It makes people uncomfortable, and I really enjoy that. It's a different approach and a different way of pleasing the crowd, so to speak. That suits 1349 really well, I think. It is a black metal concert. You don't go there to have a 'good time'. You go there to experience the music and to get into the atmosphere."

Given their self-evident disdain for what black metal has become over the years, and their diehard devotion to restoring some credibility and belief to the beleaguered genre, it's not hard to imagine 1349 existing in a self-imposed vacuum, purposefully distancing themselves from everything they regard as the enemy of black metal's former purity. But, according to Ravn, there is at least one figure still able to fly the black flag with dignity and integrity.

"I had the great pleasure of getting the new Burzum album in my hands. I would say that the general people who claim to play black metal, they have all lost now. He can come back after all those years and deliver something as astonishingly good as this album. The hypnotic, repetitive music, it's just mindblowing. That is, to me, the essence of black metal that he's creating on that album. People have been trying for ages to do that hypnotic thing, and he just shows them all the finger. They haven't come close at all. It's so perfect and right, every note that's been combined and the way that it's put together. He's really shown that he's a genius. He is radical in every way, and that's what black metal should be."

Now that 1349 are in such a strong position that they're able to take their radical black metal philosophy and art to the masses on a scale that their forebears would never have dreamed about (or, arguably, ever desired in the first place), it must be extremely satisfying to provide, through their live shows and the subversive squall of *Demonoir* itself, the same service today that Burzum and the other classic bands from Norwegian black metal's first wave provided for Ravn and his peers back in the early 90s...

"That is certainly the case," he concurs. "We take this task really seriously, to maintain the legacy of black metal. That was also the reason for starting the band, because I didn't like the direction that black metal had been starting to take in the later half of the 90s. So instead of complaining, I decided to take action and make some music myself. You have to listen to your heart and what feels right. If you don't have it in your heart then I believe that it is visible in your music. You have to believe it and then you know you have it in you and you're in touch with these feelings that I believe exist in every man's heart. It's something primal, something that is labelled 'dark' and is suppressed by religions that say that you should not get in touch with these dark emotions, but that's completely wrong. You have to know them and face them in order to control them and grow as a human being."

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Quick on the Draw

DARKTHRONE's latest album, *Circle The Wagons*, sees the world's most authoritative black metal band further solidify their no-nonsense punk credentials. Fenriz brings us an exclusive insight, in cartoon form.

TEXT: FENRIZ. ILLUSTRATIONS: NAGAWIKA.

Hi FRIENDS
THIS IS NOCTURNO CULTO FROM DARKTHRONE. WE HAVE A NEW ALBUM COMING OUT CALLED "CIRCLE THE WAGONS" AND FOR THIS OCCASION WE THOUGHT WE'D SHOW OUR FANS THE STEPS OF PRODUCING A DARKTHRONE ALBUM.
...SHOW OUR FANS THE... STEPS...?
WHAT'S NEXT?
A GUIDED TOUR?

HERE WE ARE IN FRONT OF NECROHELL, WHICH IS THE STUDIO WHERE WE PLAY AND RECORD. THE PLACE IS VERY QUIET AND SECLUDED, ALLOWING US TO FOCUS ON OUR MUSIC...
PLACE
ALTHOUGH, THE ONLY CONCERN IS THAT WE MUST DO 30KM TO GET BEER

SONGWRITING
WELL, THERE ARE NO RULES WHEN IT COMES TO SONGWRITING, BESIDES THE FACT THAT WE EACH WRITE SONGS ON OUR OWN.
WE CAN HAVE RIFF OR LYRIC IDEAS ANYWHERE, ANYTIME...
WE ARE USUALLY VERY INFLUENCED BY THE SOUND OF THE 70'S AND THE 80'S.
NAH-HAHAH-HAHH-HAH HAH-HAHAH-HAHH-HAH
FUCK FUCK FUCK! I'VE FOUND A KILLER RIFF AND I HAVE TO HUM IT 'TIL HOME
HURRY UP!

RECORDING
ONCE WE HAVE ENOUGH SONGS, WE MEET UP AND RECORD THEM IN NECROHELL 2, OUR VERY OWN STUDIO, USUALLY IN A VERY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.
TO SHOW YOU HOW WE WORK, I WILL NOW RECORD THE SECOND TAKE FOR FENRIZ' DRUMS...
HAHAHA!
SECOND TAKE
YOU'RE FUNNY!

NO NOT A KORN PATCH
A MORNE PATCH!
M-O-R-N-E
ARTWORK
WHEN THE RECORDING OF THE ALBUM IS FINISHED, WE START THINKING ABOUT THE COVER ARTWORK. WE GATHER OUR IDEAS AND SEND THEM TO OUR FRIEND AND TALENTED ARTIST DENNIS DREAD - WHO MADE ALL OF OUR SLEEVES SINCE F.O.A.D. HE'S THE ONE THAT GAVE LIFE TO MR. NECRO!

WHEN THE ALBUM COMES OUT, THE MEDIA CIRCUS BEGINS: THE NEVER-ENDING CONCERT OFFERS AND NUMEROUS INTERVIEWS. EVEN THOUGH IT HAPPENS THAT I ANSWER A FEW OF THEM, I LET FENRIZ DO THEM. HE LOVES IT!
MEDIA
"IS IT TRUE THAT YOU SACRIFICED LIVING WOMBATS DURING THE RECORDING OF TRANSILVANIAN HUNGER?"
...GOTTA LOVE THOSE POLISH INTERVIEWS

FENRIZ ON BECOMING A 'TOON

"The first time [I saw one of Nagawika's cartoons] was a couple of years ago. It was the 'If someone makes a complicated riff for Darkthrone, it's Ted... NOT me' image. I loved it. I think there's some kind of Robert Crumb-ness about his way of drawing. I didn't know who had made it. Then I saw the cross-country skiing image around the Net – it was of Ted and me. And then several new ones started to pop up in *Morbid Tales* magazine, one of the best underground 'zines in modern metal era... He also drew Motörhead ones, and one of King Diamond.

"So when Paul at Peaceville and the Snapper lads contacted me about doing something different around promotion, I thought of these cartoon one-liners after a while and contacted Annick (*Morbid Tales* mag) and asked if she knew who had done the cartoons and if we could get in touch with this person. Nagawika was delightfully up to it, and we soon found out that any of our ideas became redundant, as Nagawika himself had a far better take on us than we had ourselves.

"I was also always very fond of the cartoon following the vinyl version of Motörhead's *Another Perfect Day* '83 vinyl, so that's why I have NO bones about seeing this whole work happen for all of us. Thank you for reading quality cartoons!"

FENRIZ, JUST BACK FROM CROSS-COUNTRY SKI TRIP, MARCH 2010

CIRCLE THE WAGONS IS OUT NOW VIA PEACEVILLE RECORDS

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Fresh Meat

Blacklodge (left to right): AcidJess, Saint Vincent, Narcotic

Blacklodge

Gallic industrial black metallers journey to the dark side of philosophy.

The fusion of black metal and industrial is a rarely attempted form of alchemy, yet one that has the potential for mindblowing results. First performed by pioneers such as Mysticum, it has been kept alive since by modern-day practitioners including Dødheimsgard, Diabolicum, Aborym and, not least, France's Blacklodge. Formed in 1998 by vocalist, guitarist and programmer Saint Vincent, the band have forged a powerful and dangerous union of drugs, Satanism, BM and electronics – a combination that proved too radical for many listeners and brought only sporadic initial results. In 2003, however, the band showed their serious intentions with debut full-length, *Login:SataN* (mastered by Anaal Nathrakh's Mick Kenney), following it up with 2006's phenomenal *Solarkult*. Now the band offer their third album, *T/ME*, an opus released simultaneously on the same label with the latest record of Austrian black metallers Abigor, both being based around the concept of time in relation to Satanism.

"This album is a sequel to our former albums' concept," Vincent explains. "The first album/level is the chamber of darkness, then in the extreme depths of darkness, the void, the Light Of Truth appears – this is the SolarKult, the Chamber Of Illumination. The next step is incarnation, for infinity falls into matter and limits, ruled by time. This is the chamber of downfall, and the main focus of the album's lyrics. A negation of infinity, here presented as the beginning of the end."

No light reading, the album's lyrics draw upon the visions of 19th century doctor and theosophist Anna Kingsford, while painting from a wide musical palette that includes Bach and Nick Cave. It sees the band relinquishing the precise, angular approach of *SolarKult*, and instead heading into a more despairing and psychedelic direction.

"It's surprising," Vincent ponders. "If time is the concept it should have been *more* ordered, *more* angular. But no, because this album, as downfall, is putting forward the human reaction to facing the angular pressure of time, which results in anguish, despair and panic, it makes the music and the sound paradoxically more chaotic. *SolarKult* had the power of a clear vision, strength and clarity, and this one is falling into the chaos of doubt, despair and uncertainty. *Solarkult* is like taking acid – but in a revelatory way, a prophetic trip – and *T/ME* is the bad trip flashback."

Such philosophical and mystical explorations define Blacklodge, yet the intellectual nature of the concept is always complemented by their adrenaline-pumping music and live performances, as evinced on their recent European tour, supported by respected countrymen Hell Militia (see panel, right) and Aosoth.

"The 'Black' in our name stands for the dark side of magic and 'Lodge' stands for esoteric secrets and initiation. We link our material, technical, industrial world with religious feeling and mystical revelations – two topics that are usually considered paradoxical. The band sees the religious experience through the infernal influence of the machine. The machine controls the human. Indeed, *we* are still slaves of the beats when playing live."

DAYAL PATTERSON

Who They Are

LINE-UP: Saint Vincent (vocals, guitars, samples/programming) Narcotic (guitars), AcidJess (bass).
SOUND LIKE: Once an ordered, ever-twisting assault, now a psychedelic industrial black nightmare
CURRENT RELEASE: *T/ME* (End All Life Productions, 2010).
WEBSITE: www.loginsatan.org

Primitive Graven Image: chaos theorists

Primitive Graven Image

IF Primitive Graven Image's 2007 debut album, *Traversing The Awesome Night*, sounded like a band crawling out of the primordial soup, bristling with baleful intent, these Southeast English black metallers have made a huge evolutionary leap with the follow-up, *Celebrating Impending Chaos*. Treated to a spacious production job, they've set off on wide-eyed, unfettered mission. Their luminous atmospheres, ability to soak up other influences and knack for a kick-ass tune do bear a clear resemblance to Watain, but PGI still cast their own light as they scour their way across the void. A thirst for revelation resonates throughout *...Chaos*, suggesting PGI aren't going to get bogged down in genre policing. As drummer Lord Blast states, "We certainly embrace black metal as a feeling, but there is much more to what we do than trying to stick to some tradition or rulebook."

Who They Are:

LINE-UP: Dokkalfur (vocals, guitar), Ljosalfur (vocals, guitar), Mjolnir (bass), Lord Blast (drums).
SOUND LIKE: Exploratory, but still well-versed BM taking a scalpel to the night sky.
CURRENT RELEASE: *Celebrating Impending Chaos* (Envenomation, 2010).
WEBSITE: www.pgimetal.com

Hell Militia

FEATURING members of Mütiilation, Arkhon Infaustus, Antaeus and Secrets Of The Moon, Hell Militia contain much of France's black metal talent. Their new album, *Last Station On The Road To Death*, continues in a similar, nasty vein to their official 2005 debut, *Canonisation Of The Foul Spirit*, following the former album's Alice Cooper cover with a GG Allin track. "Because this is dirt and we are dirt," explains vocalist Meynach of the choice. "The black metal 'dress up', this is just superficial – we live this, it's more or less our everyday life. Guitarist T. Persecutor adds: "We follow rules that we still believe in. Black metal's not a hobby, it's what we have inside. But still we are not limited – we do this our way."

Who They Are:

LINE-UP: Meynach (vocals), T.Persecutor (guitar), Arkdaemon (guitar), Hellsukkubus (bass), D. Terror (drums).
SOUND LIKE: Monochromatic, depraved black metal with an outlaw spirit.
CURRENT RELEASE: *Last Station On The Road To Death* (Debemur Morti Prods 2010).
WEBSITE: www.myspace.com/hellmilitiaband

Hell Militia: black metal *their* way

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EMERGENCY GATE

THE NEMESIS CONSTRUCT

release 30-April

The modern melodic death machine "Emergency Gate" returns with a thunderstrike! "The Nemesis Construct" - Direct, no compromise, neckbreak preprogrammed! On Vocals Matthias Kupka (ex-Suidakra) and on Drums Dominik Scholz (session Drummer of Lacrimas Profundere). Coverartwork by Raf W. (Metallica, Slayer, Iron Maiden) & as guest vocals Tom Englund

Evergrey

Gorath MXCII

The 4th album of this belgian band: all about local heresy, heritage & heathen tradition. A real disgusting piece of art!!! Mixed at Shumcot Studio by Reinier Schenk & Mastered at Unisound by Dan Swanö

The Monolith Deathcult The white crematorium 2.0

Rerelease of The white crematorium in a complete new outfit. All songs new recorded Songs in the brute Trivmvirate style with bonus song Kindertodestanz.

Mosfet Sickness of Memory

Deathlike Thrash n' Roll, dirty beats, thrilling Bay Area Riffing leads into razorsharp melodies. CHECK OUT ON REFUSEDRECORDS.COM

Semargl Ordo Bellictum Satanas

Ukrainian Black / Thrash / Black'n'Roll with guest musicans like Jonny Maudling (Bal-Sagoth, My dying bride), Iscariah (ex-Immortal), Nera (Darzamat), Novy (ex-Behemoth) & Vrangsinn (CF, Nattefrost)

Thornium Fides Luciferius

Swedish Thornium made a strong comeback with their 2nd album in '09 after 15 years of absence. They are back, and this time their sound has developed into perfection! "Fides Luciferius" is an occult black metal symphony of all that is unholy!

Svartahrid Ex Inferi

It's one again time for these norwegian veterans to release yet another black metal classic! With "Ex inferi" being their fifth album, Svartahrid possess all the experience and craftsmanship to forge an excellent work like this one!

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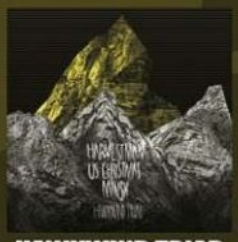

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A STORM OF LIGHT
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MIKE PATTON
Mondo Cane

Mike Patton (**Faith No More**, **Peeping Tom**, **Tomahawk**) unveils *Mondo Cane*, his Italian-language rock-meets-orchestra hybrid.

The album features traditional Italian pop songs as well as a rendition of Ennio Morricone's 'Deep Down', all recorded with a 30-piece orchestra and choir to create the uniquely new Mondo Cane sound.

MELVINS
The Bride Screamed Murder

Welcome to the third Melvins album featuring the four-piece line-up of Buzz Osbourne, Dale Crover, Jared Warren and Coady Willis.

How are they able to keep it so fresh and unique 25 years into their career? Who on Earth knows!!

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Subterranea ALBUMS

1349's Ravn turns over a new leaf

1349

DEMONOIR

INDIE RECORDINGS

Blazing back to the blast

AFTER 2005's blistering *Hellfire* album, last year's *Revelations Of The Black Flame* bewildered many fans. While its frequent use of lengthy, non-metal parts was defended by some, the shift from outright aggression to overt experimentation was generally judged A Bad Idea, leaving mixed expectations for this, their fifth album. Those hoping for a total abandonment of the ambient numbers that proved so dominating on *Revelations...* will be dismayed to find that there are no fewer than seven included here. Despite that, however, the band's previous claims that they would be pursuing a similar direction to the predecessor has also proved somewhat misleading – make no mistake about it, aside from these minute-long atmospheric intervals, *Demonoir* is an album of ferocious and technical black metal. Shifting between pummelling technical bombardments and slower, moody Satyricon-esque passages, vocalist Ravn divides his time between spoken word and traditional BM rasps, the music still revealing an experimental edge, but well within the confines of the Norse black metal blueprint. It's an album that should win back those fans alienated by the last record, while maintaining the stamp of individuality the group had achieved by following their artistic visions. **[8]**

DAYAL PATTERSON

Reviewed next month

ABIGOR

TIME IS THE SULPHUR IN THE VEINS OF THE SAINT...

END ALL LIFE

It's time for avant Austrian BM

ABIGOR'S latest opus is a co-release with Blacklodge, the two albums linked by an Einstein quote regarding the nature of time. It's a far cry from the band's more visceral early works, following in the same direction as 2007's avant-garde *Fractal Possession* – a treat for the head as much as the heart. Divided into two 20-minute chapters, the music largely avoids traditional structure, moving from one technical, discordant passage to the next as unyieldingly as time itself. With its angular riffing, cold atmosphere, electronics and spoken word, comparisons to Mayhem's *Grand Declaration Of War* are inevitable, though fans of Ephel Duath and perhaps even Ulver should find reward here. **[8]**

DAYAL PATTERSON

BLACKLODGE

T/ME

END ALL LIFE

Gallic industrialists loosen up

GIVEN the rigorously controlled nature of 2006s's superb *Solar-kult* album, it's a surprise to discover that *T/ME* is, in many ways, the more organic side of the Blacklodge/Abigor co-release. Still very much industrial BM in nature, the band have nonetheless headed towards looser, more psychedelic and melancholy territories, in contrast to the angular assault of old, aptly reflecting the despairing lyrics. Where previous efforts blended aggressive riffing and computerised beats, *T/ME* offers a more uncertain experience, mainman Saint Vincent's vocals sounding more insane than ever while the percussion is frequently buried beneath the despairing melodies. A slow-growing yet undoubtedly rewarding album. **[8]**

DAYAL PATTERSON

FORTÍD

VOLUSPA PART III – FALL OF THE ANGELS

SCHWARZDORN PRODUCTIONS

Eclectic Icelandic BM

FOLLOWING on from *Voluspa* parts I and II, *Part III* sees the Icelandic black metallers (now relocated to Norway) presenting a mixture of styles, with elements of Viking-era Bathory, the melodic approach of Dissection, some straightforward BM blasts and mellow acoustic folk songs. Whilst a mix of influences is often a good thing, bringing in fresh ideas, Fortíd don't seem to have quite found their niche. At full throttle the album is decent enough but not especially memorable. It's the epic Bathory riffs and slow sections that work best. In fact, 10-minute closing monster *The Future*, with its nods to post-rock and doom, hints at what they could become with a more focused approach. **[6]**

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

ADMIRAL ANGRY

A FIRE TO BURN DOWN THE WORLD

SHELS MUSIC

Taking misery into the beyond

WHEN Admiral Angry's driving force, guitarist Daniel Kraus, passed away last year, this sludge outfit bravely soldiered on, releasing their debut, *Buster. A Fire...* is reportedly Daniel's final, misanthropic calling card, a single, half-hour-long exposition of pounding, acerbic hate delivered by cauterising guitars, Godflesh bass rumble and the unearthly screech of Chris Lindblad. As with most lengthy works, there are forgettable sequences, namely, the feedback excursions – but *A Fire...* mostly stays true to an explosive Richter-scale riff with freeform drums from the Tim Wyskida (Khanate/Khylst) school, creating as blackened a listen as you'll come across all year. **[8]**

CONNIE GORDON

EXHALE

BLIND

DARK BALANCE

The fast and the fucking furious

EVER since Nasum single-handedly planted a giant stick of dynamite up the arse of a limping grindcore scene back in the 90s, Sweden has been churning out bands of a comparable quality, and Exhale are manifestly one of the best of the lot. A welcome follow-up to the brilliant but criminally overlooked *Prototype*, *Blind* continues their laudably precise and devastating approach to breaking the speed barrier, but with a few extra nods towards death metal and occasional hints that musical horizons have broadened ever so slightly during the last four years. The core of this album remains classic grind at its purest and most tirelessly focused, as hymns to hate like *Sick Addiction* and *Crushed* whiz by in a cloud of spite. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

HELLVETO

KRY

PAGAN

A majestic solo voyage

THE work of one individual, the clearly obsessive L.O.N, *Kry* is Hellveto's 13th album in 12 years, a rate of output largely attributed to the fact that its sprung from a formula that's barely changed since the band's inception. His latest may not be a revelation as such, in that its grim, string-laden, pagan/martial BM pilgrimage will be familiar to anyone who's dipped a toe into Hellveto's longboat-bearing waters before, but L.O.N. has tweaked the tempo down a notch to reveal a new, optimised level of determined grandeur. *Kry* is steeped in a misty, mystical atmosphere that's usually the hallowed preserve of Negura Bunget, its breathtaking sense of anticipation feeling like you're eternally approaching the fractal coastline of Valhalla. **[8]**

JONATHAN SELZER

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Twilight. Screaming teenage girls looking for R-Patz just out of shot

LUDICRA
THE TENANT
PROFOUND LORE

Nudging black metal's boundaries

SAN Francisco's Ludicra have never been the straightest arrow in black metal's quiver, consistently taking the genre sideways, and the passage of time only gives them greater opportunity to mess with convention. On *The Tenant*, they do so in various forms from the poetic desolation of the album art and anthemic majesty of *Truth Won't Set You Free* to the swivelling folk passages of *A Larger Silence* and Swervedriver-ish swirl of the title track. Then there's *In Stable*, a frosty take on Metallica's *The Shortest Straw* and Megadeth's *Hangar 18*. A broader sense of purpose is injected into the blasts of chromatic riffing and Laurie Sue Shanahan banshee howls as Ludicra continue to push black metal's signposts outward. **[8]**

CONNIE GORDON

MEADS OF ASPHODEL/OLD CORPSE ROAD
ENGLISH BLACK PUNK METAL
GODREAH

Eccentric Albions forge an alliance

HAILING from the Northeast, Old Corpse Road are a relatively new addition to the cauldron of British BM. With just one demo under their belt, they now find themselves debuting properly alongside experimental eccentrics The Meads Of Asphodel. Despite Scandinavian influences, they achieve a distinctly English, early Cradle-esque veneer. The second half of this split witnesses the ever-restless and unpredictable Meads turning to UK crust/punk classics by Doom, Conflict and Skeptix, a piano-laden rendition of a Hellbastard track and a bizarre mangling of The Kinks' *You Really Got Me*. **[6]**

GREG MOFFITT

ONDSKAPT
ARISEN FROM THE ASHES
OSMOSE PRODUCTIONS

The Swede smell of brimstone

ONDSKAPT may claim that they had no genres in mind but the words 'black' and 'metal' spring to mind the second *Ominous Worship Of The Divine* kicks in – after a spooky intro, of course. Very much in the orthodox Swedish canon – fans of Watain and Funeral Mist take note – *Arisen...* was recorded at Stockholm's Necromorbus Studios, the go-to lair for modern black metal. And, much like Watain, there is some serious love for Beelzebub, albeit at the expense of their fellow man. Less wilfully obscure than early releases, there is a real sense of diabolical purpose and genuine misanthropy permeating the album. They claim their music exists through The Evil One. He can't be all bad, then. **[8]**

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

TWILIGHT
MONUMENT TO TIME END
SOUTHERN LORD

An all-star bad trip bonanza

THERE'S something intensely disorientating about Twilight's second. It's as if the knowledge that they're a low-key supergroup featuring habitual rule-breakers like Nachtmystium's Blake Judd and Isis's Aaron Turner ensures that every fresh twist and deftly taken sharp turn here is preceded by huge waves of anticipation and nervous excitement. The music itself – a genre-shredding combination of swirling post-metal, monochrome BM sandstorm and eyeball-spinning noise rock mantra – fulfils all those breathless expectations, coming across like an accidental tribute to Enslaved, but filtered through two decades of underground Americana and a sprinkling of Neurosis-style arcane subversion. Whether erecting a huge wall of shimmering noise, blasting for some urban, besuited Satan or tripping the dark phantasmic, Twilight are so plainly making music for themselves that you're left feeling slightly voyeuristic, but privileged too. Herein lies the art of darkness. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

Dreadful News

Subterranea-sponsored Hole In The Sky fest announces full lineup!

HOLE In The Sky, Bergen, Norway's unmissable annual metal fest, has announced the (almost) full lineup for this year's extravaganza, taking place at the Garage and USF Verftet venues between August 25-28. **ROTTING CHRIST**, **DEAD CONGREGATION**, **REPUGNANT** and **GRAVE MIASMA** play Garage on the opening night proper, while the venue hosts **SUFFOCATION**, **ANGEL WITCH**, **EVILE**, **ENFORCER** and **ASTRO-SONIQ** on August 26. **VENOM**, **CATHEDRAL**, **IHSAHN**, **THE DEVIL'S BLOOD**, **SÓLSTAFIR** and **SECRETS OF THE MOON** is the spectacular lineup at USF on August 27, matched by **OBITUARY**, **WATAIN**, **TRIPTYKON**, **NUNSLAUGHTER** and **OBLITERATION** on the final night, with a surprise act due to headline (announced next month). Lovers of metal and picturesque Nordic towns might want to get to Bergen early to catch **GOJIRA**'s HITS-sponsored show at USF on August 22, while a pre-HITS 'Incoming' night on August 24 hosts Bergen and Oslo bands Dead To This World, Valhall, Lobotomized, Byfrost and Rikets Crust. Add a unique, community atmosphere and the chance to rub up against Bergen's inebriated BM legends at Garage, and HITS is surely an indelible date on your calendar. Find ticket info and all the latest news at www.holeinthesky.no.

Grief In Brief

WITH their stunning new album, *Lawless Darkness*, due to hit the shelves and deepest recesses of your consciousness on June 6, Sweden's **WATAIN** are gearing up for a summer of live activity. As well as their Hole In The Sky appearance, the blood-burning black metallers will be playing the various festivals across Europe, including Swedenrock on June 12, featuring a special set of Bathory covers, introduced by the father of the late legend, Quorthon, and London's Armageddon Festival at Highbury's Garage venue on June 4-5, where they'll be lining up alongside the likes of **NIFELHEIM**, **REPUGNANT**, **VON** and **THE DEVIL'S BLOOD**. *Subterreana* has a special studio report with frontman Erik Danielsson at www.myspace.com/metalhammer_extreme.

WOLVES IN THE THRONE ROOM are helping to raise funds for John Cobbett, guitarist for fellow West Coast black metallers, **LUDICRA**, who is suffering from a ruptured appendix without health insurance. See blogs.myspace.com/wolvesinthethroneroom for details.

Watain's Erik Danielsson

Wolves In The Throne Room: brace yourselves

DON'T MISS...

AS *Subterranea* recently pointed out, a wave of nature-venerating BM is sweeping across the scene, and the band who arguably got the ball rolling, **WOLVES IN THE THRONE ROOM**, are heading back to our shores to unleash their crushing sonic catharsis from May 20-25, playing Kingston, Birmingham, Brighton, Manchester, London and Bristol. With similarly green-charged UK heathens **WODENSTHRONE**, supporting, this tour promises to be a consciousness-altering thrill-ride. See www.myspace.com/wolvesinthethroneroom.

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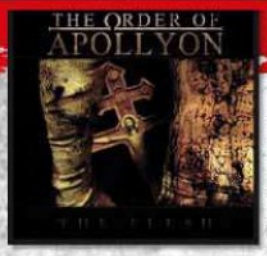

THE ORDER OF APOLLYON

THE FLESH

LISTENABLE

UK supergroup turns to the Lord

CONSISTING of (mostly) former members of Aborted, Akercocke and Cradle Of Filth, The Order Of Apollyon's reputation will clearly precede their music, especially when they describe themselves as 'a channel for delivering a harmonic covenant with The Lord' designed to spread 'the message of our God the Supreme Being'. It's the sort of guff we've come to expect, but at least their debut makes them sound serious about the whole thing. As you'd expect, *The Flesh* is a professional, ready-to-roll slice of blackened death metal – angry, aggressive, atmospheric and with an experimental edge – all surrounded by a Behemoth-like aura and Morbid Angel-style otherworldliness. **[7]**

GREG MOFFITT

RAMESSES

TAKE THE CURSE

RITUAL PRODUCTIONS

Welcome to the terror doom

THIS bad trip grinds inexorably on, the disorientating throb of doom at its most vicious and venal dragging us all ever further along Hell's colon. Ramesses care not for progress, for theirs is a singular and hopeless path and only the bravest (or most heroically drug-addled) need apply. *Take The Curse* seems somehow spiritually linked to forebears Electric Wizard's *Come My Fanatics*, albeit without quite the same degree of speaker-mincing disgust, and yet Ramesses remain atmospherically unique as their black mantras pile on extra layers of distorted, mutant ear-blubber, sucking all light from the room and pumping every reachable skull with thoughts of dead-eyed despair and sweet, welcome death. Splendid fun, as it turns out. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

WITCHSORROW

WITCHSORROW

RISE ABOVE

Sleeping through the Sabbath

SO, Black Sabbath: pretty awesome yeah? And Sleep fucking rule too, right? So what if there was a band that had the doom-laden riffage of Sabbath, the pummelling heaviness of Sleep and the occultist leanings of Witchfinder General, all played at a pace slower than a dune bug in molasses? Well... they'd be awesome, wouldn't they? Actually, yes. And they'd also go by the name Witchsorrow. There is little about this English doom trio's debut that is startlingly original – the track *Thou Art Cursed* could easily have been recorded by *Jerusalem*-era Sleep – but that's missing the point. If you're inclined to spend your evenings supine in the woods with necromancers and a large bag of dope, you'll love this. **[7]**

TOBY COOK

RAGNAROK

COLLECTORS OF THE KING

REGAIN

Progress is for pussies

RAGNAROK are Norwegians playing black metal, so no prizes for guessing what they sound like. In fact, the label is making a big fuss about them being one of the last true Norwegian BM acts. A contentious claim, perhaps, but there's no question that Ragnarok have been knocking out top-notch records since 1995 and that *Collectors Of The Kings* is no different. Very much focused on keeping the spirit of early Darkthrone and Satyricon alive, there are no concessions to notions of progression and certainly no compromise. As tribute to their musical heritage, it's a fine piece of work, *Burning The Earth* in particular being a stonking track. If mid-90s Norway if your thing then Ragnarok will float your (long)boat. **[7]**

ALASTAIR RIDDELL

SEMARGL

ORDO BELLICTUM SATANAS

TWILIGHT

Black metal with extra swagger

AESTHETICALLY, Semargl are firmly in BM territory, but there are noticeable quantities of melodic death metal and balls-out rock'n'roll in their material too. On the tooth-rattling *Credo Satania*, these Ukrainian reprobates sound like a necrotised Motörhead, replete with runaway kick-drums and a dash of skewed blues. Elsewhere, *Credo Possess* sounds more like Norwegian oddballs Khold, albeit without that band's rhythmic myopia. With a bold production and plenty of notables lending a hand, such as Carpathian Forest's Vrangsinn, this sounds like the work of a band with a surfeit of ambition and confidence. It also kicks arse, which might not be a routine BM aim, but it's one that suits Semargl down to the ground. **[7]**

DOM LAWSON

WORMROT

ABUSE

EARACHE

Ugly noise from the Far East

THERE'S something comforting about Earache releasing top-notch grindcore again. After reissuing Insect Warfare's peerless *World Extermination*, the label have stumbled upon another flesh-flaying gem here. Blasting out of Singapore with levels of intensity and scabby-knuckled rawness that would give the scene-leading Swedes and Finns a run for their money, this band take an old-school, heads-down-and-hammer-'em approach, firing off short, shocking bursts of high-velocity noise like *Lost Swines* and sounding utterly incensed throughout. They even manage to turn Yeah Yeah Yeahs' *Rich* into a venom-flecked, revolutionary call-to-arms. Balls-out, life-affirming grindcore mayhem from raging start to shattered finish. **[8]**

DOM LAWSON

The Rest in Pieces

***Subterranea* goes on a pagan diet.**

Thundra: stirring, not shaking

ANY band with a name like **SLARTIBARTFASS** (presumably a reference to *The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy*'s Slartibartfast, who sculpted the fjords of Norway) and a female playing the dudelsack (them's bagpipes, you filthy minded lot) deserve a closer look. *Funkenfeuer* **[8]** (Trollzorn) is indeed an impressive and varied symphonic folk metal album that nods to Finntroll's whimsy, Nordic black metal and epic soundtracks such as *Lord Of The Rings*. Talking of odd band names... need more fibre in your diet? Try **BRAN BARR!** This French band is named, not after a healthy snack, but instead a mythical raven who takes the soul of the dying to the next world. As that explanation suggests, this long-running French act focus on the more sombre side of folk metal, with heavy black metal overtones despite the frequent use of whistles and violins and the odd upbeat moment. New album *Sidh* **[8]** (Trollzorn) is only their second release in a decade and a half, and is reflective of the apparent time and effort that's gone into it, being well-structured, carefully constructed and rewarding. Coincidentally **NYDVIND** begin their latest album, *Sworn To The Elders*, **[6]** with the sound of a raven and feature both the bass player and the vocalist of Bran Barr. Similarly earnest, Nydvind emphasise the more heroic side of pagan metal, but do so at the expense of dynamics, making this an enjoyable, but slightly dry, listen. Five years ago, Russia's **NOMANS LAND** released *Hammerfrost*, a superb keyboard-drenched and melodic effort to rival anything by bigger names such as Ensiferum. The rest of their discography has failed to quite match that sublime combination of Maiden-like slickness, epic black Viking metal overtones and knees-up drinking folk, but new album *Farnod* **[7]** (Einheit) is worth a look for those who enjoy a spot of heroic and upbeat metal. More Viking metal from the home of the Vikings, with Norwegians **THUNDRA** and *Ignored By Fear* **[7]**, also on Einheit. It's epic, stirring and very black, just as you'd expect from ex-members of Enslaved and Einherjer. Throw in a dash of Borknagar, not least in the soaring Garm-like vocals, and you have a record that should appeal as much to fans of frosty Nordic BM as those Johnny-come-latelys who now go to gigs with blue paint on their faces!

DAYAL PATTERSON

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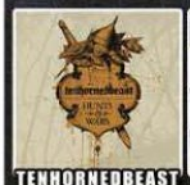

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Jørgen Munkeby and Ihsahn prepare to blow us away

Taake's Hoest has a black metal knees-up

ESTER SEGARRA

Inferno 2010

ROCKEFELLER/JOHN DEE, OSLO

AFTER last year's relatively low-key affair, the 'club night' that kicks off this year's 10th anniversary of Inferno is a good omen, with crowds squeezing into the John Dee venue, all trying to get a glimpse of **SHINING [8]** as they manage the remarkable feat of replicating the skronking density of their *BlackJazz* album onstage. Jørgen Munkeby offers further proof that a saxophone can become a lethal sonic weapon as the band lock together to offer a glimpse of what an intemperate, alien traffic jam would sound like. The Swans fans eagerly awaiting former chanteuse, **JARBOE [8]**, at the Vicotia venue are rewarded early on with a starkly arresting *Mother/Father*. Her backing band provide a crushing, rhythmic backdrop for a series of searing, ritualistic incantations, including a duet with Mayhem's Attila Csihar for a funereal *The Soul Continues* as her ululating wail wraps itself around his subterranean rasp before taking to the floor as if providing a ceremonial act of cleansing.

Elevating art isn't all that's on offer, and at a packed Blå venue, **VOMITORY [7]** are spewing the filth, their atavistic tidal wave of palpitating death metal, like Bolt Thrower on amphetamines, offering an exhilarating, unedifying corrective.

If the vast majority of the following day's Inferno audience don't know who **EYEHATEGOD [8]** are, they sure do by the end of their set. With a sound even more beefed up than a newly healthy-looking Mike Williams, the NOLAns treat each riff like a battering ram wielded by the damned, and this is a schooling in the engorged heart of Southern sludge that soon has the hard-to-impress Norwegians in their thrall. Downstairs at the John Dee, the exuberant, keyboard-laced melodic death pumped out by Mumbai, India's **DEMONIC RESURRECTION [7]** proves a winning formula, aided by a charismatic, likeable frontman who can still spill his guts in the vocal department. The black/death formula rarely leaves a mark, but **BELPHEGOR's [7]** epic take still scorches as it approaches an apocalyptic moment of reckoning. On paper, **FINNTROLL's [7]** carnivalesque romp looks out of place amongst Inferno's inventory of grimness, but the full venue and mass of pumping fists says otherwise, and even if there's a caustic undercurrent, ancient genes are clearly stirred and the anthemic *Trollhammeren* sends everyone into raptures. Only the early birds get into the John Dee to see **NACHTMYSTIUM [9]**. Incalculably more intense than at their recent London gig, Blake Judd feeds off an increasingly ecstatic audience until his eyes look like they're about to pop their sockets. *Your True Enemy* comes storming out like a rock-pelting pyroclastic cloud, while *High On Hate*, from new album *Addicts*, is a livid missive erupting as though some ancient, incensed sage's lair has been burst open. **MARDUK [7]** only really get going once Primordial's Alan Nemtheanga joins them onstage for typically emphatic cameo, but from here on in frontman Mortuus becomes the channel for a coursing, forthright river of conviction that closes the night in fine, blasphemous style.

Oslo really ought to be twinned with Birmingham, and following previous years' triumphant performances from Anaal Nathrakh and Bolt Thrower, it's **BENEDICTION's [8]** turn to beat the throng into submission with their brute, encrusted death metal. Dave Hunt takes time off from his masterfully implacable growl to offer genuinely humbled thanks to the gathered. There are moments in your gig-going lifetimes when you can proudly proclaim 'I was there', but if **IHSAHN's [9]** set isn't one of them, that's only because its closing is so unspeakably sublime, all of us lose our co-ordinates en masse. Having opened with the dense, blaring *A Grave Inversed*, joined by Shining's Jørgen Munkeby, and navigated between strain-towards-the-horizon urgency and all manner of progressive fire-stoking with his customary, commanding helmsmanship, his masterpiece, *Undercurrent*, unfurls and evolves until THE moment when his unfettered chant rings out and sax

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Death Angel's Mark Osegueda makes Inferno's closing statement

Mayhem's Attila Csihar offers his own view on the Catholic Church controversy

Jarboe: a voice from the beyond

blooms like you're witness to some hallowed, singular act of creation, and we all stumble out, speechless and trembling, for a post-coital puff. Even with Attila Csihar back at the helm, **MAYHEM [9]** have proven to be an unreliable proposition live, but headlining with a spectacular stage set that includes huge, decaying animal ribs, demon skeletons and a lake of fire, a barely recognisable Attila – dressed like the desiccated soul of a Catholic priest – and band summon up a sound of utter, gnarly monstrosity as the classic likes of *Funeral Moon* and *Pagan Fear* become injections of acrid adrenaline. The night culminates in a ritual crucifixion, an apt commemoration for this Good Friday.

The final day's highs include **ÅRABROT**'s **[8]** scrabble from filthy darkness to an extended, luminous guitar skree, Spain's apocalyptic butchers **COMO MUERTOS [7]** making death-grind a descriptive rather than generic term, **TAAKE**'s **[7]** overcoming of a muddy sound after frontman Hoest, coming on like a malevolent, green-lit goblin, is joined by Nattefrost to rule over the amassed like black metal's own Iggy Pop and **DESTRÖYER 666's [7]** rough'n'ready, scab-scraping war metal. **THE KOVENANT**'s **[6]** full rendition of their *Nexus Polaris* album is an impressively stately affair, as long as you forget that Dimmu and Arcturus proved better berths for ornate and symphonic BM, but if you want a sound to echo through time undimmed, the ageless **DEATH ANGEL [9]** prove themselves Thrash Ground Zero with an energy that could solve global warming if harnessed, and classic heaped upon classic proving an object lesson for newbies and their contemporaries alike. New track, aptly titled *River Of Rapture*, shows their songwriting prowess is still at full capacity, closing Inferno 2010 in a state of giddy exhilaration.

JONATHAN SELZER

The last Thirteen Questions

Mortuus Marduk

The frontman for Sweden's blistering black metallers offers a rare perspective on will power, martial arts and the Bible.

When you first started, did you ever think your career in music would last this long?
"I wasn't really looking for a career, it was more, 'This is what I want to do, so I'm going to do it'. Even if people don't buy my records or whatever it's not really what's going to decide if I'm going to keep playing or not."

Do you believe in God or the Devil?
"Absolutely. *The Bible* is the foundation I like to work from, though it's not necessarily the absolute truth."

What has been the high point of your career?
"I can't say one thing. The most important thing is being able to release music and play live."

And the lowest point?
"I haven't got there yet. I'm pretty clear with my goals. If you plan really carefully, well, it's going to happen like that. Then of course you could talk about some shows we've played where we've turned up and there's been no promotion, so we show up and there's just a few people, but I couldn't say that was a low point, it's just a boring show."

Is there a piece of art or film that's important to you?
"We love the *Seventh Seal* by Ingmar Bergman. But is it important? Well at least for myself as a creator, I think my music and lyrics would be exactly the same as if I hadn't seen any art or film in my whole life."

What albums would you take with you to a desert island?
"I'd say... none. I take no albums. I could say lots of albums, but I don't see the reason. It's going to be different another week anyway."

What are your ambitions now?
"To keep on doing what I'm doing. I'm pretty happy where we are right now, to be honest. This is what we've always been aiming for and this is where we are, so no complaints really. But you can always take it to a higher level on many things."

Which bands do you think should reform and which should split up?
"I don't think any band should reform – if you split up once, you should leave it like that. Who should split up? Probably 90 per cent of *all* bands, but I'm not big on name-dropping so I will leave it like that."

Are you a difficult person to work with?
"I can be very easy to work with or very hard. I have a strong will and I know what I like and what I don't like. If someone includes something in the music that I really don't like it's going to be difficult, but usually everything runs smoothly."

Have you made any enemies along the way?
"Well, probably. It would surprise me if I hadn't, but who I don't know. I think it's pretty easy to make enemies whatever you do; you're always going to step on people's feet, right? Especially when you are dealing with extreme music, extreme lyrics – that's going to upset people. But that's how we like it. I wouldn't be satisfied if we released an album and no one was pissed off about it. We get the usual stuff on the internet but no one ever says it to our face for some reason..."

Is it true you have quite a strong interest in martial arts?
"Yes, I've been practising sanshou for about 10 years. It's the modern fighting part of kung fu, but it's nothing to do with what you see in the Hollywood movies; it's more like kickboxing with throws."

How much of your time do you devote to that?
"I was also competing for some time but not now, because of too much touring. I couldn't do it at the same level because of the intense touring. Every time we got back it was like starting from scratch again."

"90 PER CENT OF *ALL* BANDS SHOULD SPLIT UP"

What is the most important lesson you've learned in your life?
"The most important lesson I have learned in my life is to do what you feel like yourself and not what others expect of you. It's a good lesson."

MARDUK PLAY HELLFEST FESTIVAL ON JUNE 18
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Marduk (left to right): Morgan, Mortuus, Lars Brodesson, Devo

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